The Best of the Volume 2

JOURNAL

of the Travellers' Aid Society

328

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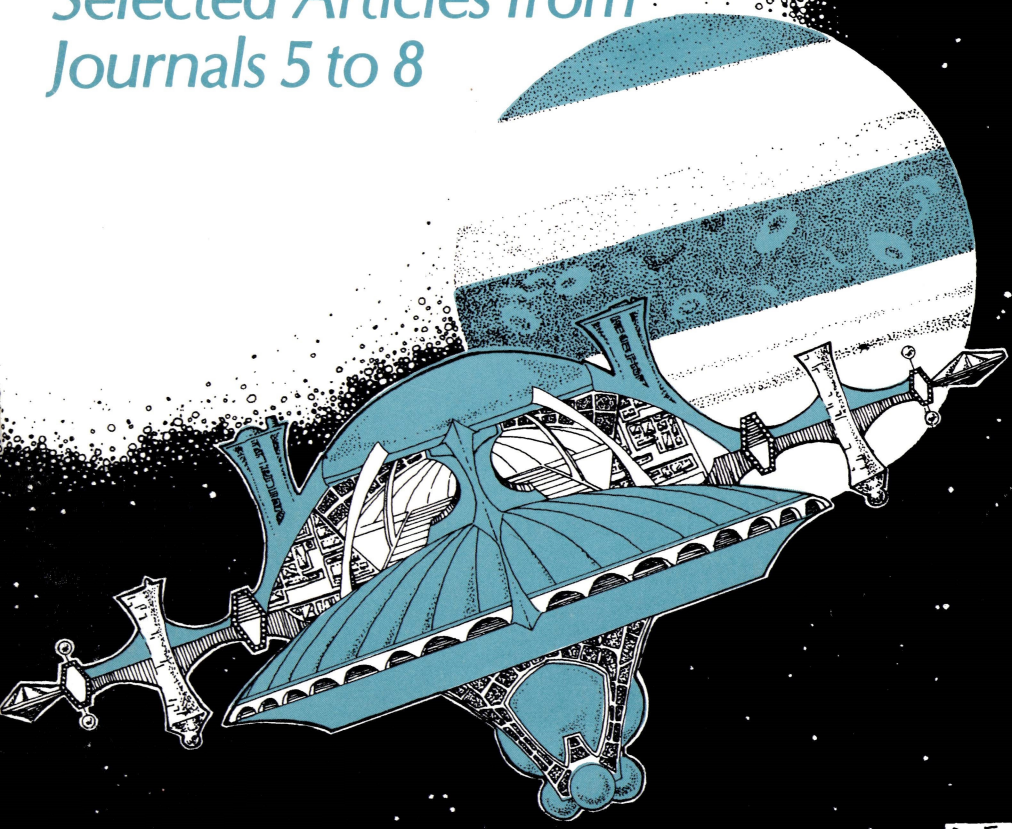

the JOURNAL of the Travellers' Aid Society

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Dates in these issues of the *Journal* are given in accordance with an arbitrary Imperial calendar of 365 days. The expression of date consists of a three-digit day number (showing the current day of the year) followed by a dash and a four-digit year number (showing the current year since the founding of the Imperium).

The *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society* is a science-fiction gaming magazine dedicated to **Traveller,** GDW's role-playing game set in the far future.

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WINNER— H. G. WELLS AWARD: BEST MAGAZINE COVERING ROLE-PLAYING, 1980

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From the Management

This is the second anthology of articles from the *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society.* In its second year of publication, the Journal again won the H. G. Wells Award for Best Professional Magazine Covering Role-playing, and grew to have a circulation of over 10,000. Our loyal readership has been responsible in no small way for this growth, and we would like to take this oportunity to thank all those who have made the *Journal* what it is today.

The chief addition to the *Journal* was called Contact! and it has proven to be our second most popular continuing feature (only Amber Zone received a higher reader approval).

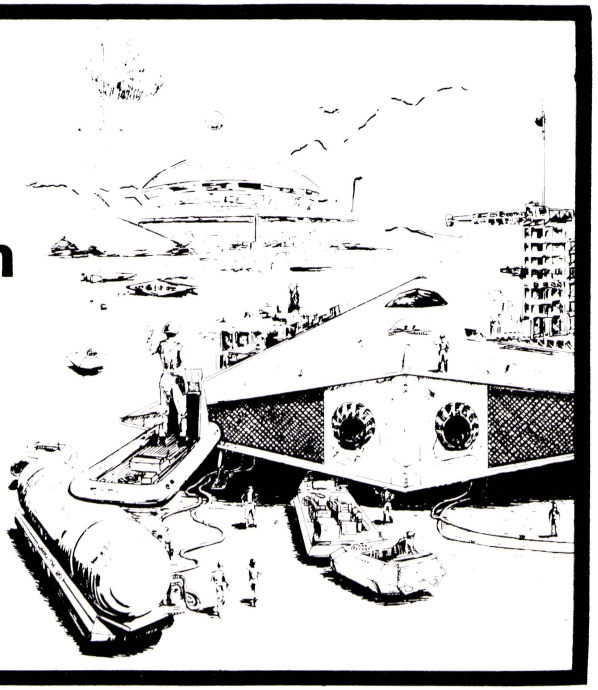
For the benefit of any readers who do not have issue 7, in which Contact! was introduced, the relevant portion of From the Management is reprinted below:

"To do aliens right requires a lot of work. It is not enough to conjure up a creature seven feet tall, with three arms, purple skin, and an eye in the middle of its forehead and call it an alien. If the only difference between the being described and a human is external, the being is nothing more than a person in an alien suit and the physical description should include a zipper down the front. An alien should have a complete, coherent, consistent background. What did the being evolve from? When did its forebears attain intelligence, and in response to what stimuli? What effect does the being's biological make-up have on its behavior? What is the nature of the being's home culture, and how does this culture effect its behavior in various situations? All of these things and more should be considered when creating an alien, even if no playercharacters are to be of the race. (We've done all this for the major races we have designed...although it may take a little time for it all to see print.) The more work put into the design of an alien race, the longer it will be before your players get tired of that race.

Players who wish to use alien characters must work as hard as the referee. In addition to studying the background created by the referee, the player must strive to always keep in character when playing an alien persona. If the characteristics of a race require reckless bravery in certain situations, then if those situations occur, a player must be willing to wade cheerfully into hand-to-hand combat with seven Imperial marines. A certain amount of inconsistent behavior is permitted, but people who want to be aliens must be willing to act the part.

While the work required to incorporate aliens into a campaign is large, the benefits are enormous in terms of player interest and options open to the referee. Playing an alien well can be the ultimate role-playing challenge to a player, and encounters with aliens offer a wide range of new and different (but not always pleasant) experiences even for players who do not choose to play alien characters."

Speculation Without a Starship



Engaging in speculative trade by buying cargoes at low prices, transporting them to another market and selling them at a higher price can be very lucrative for a player with the proper skills and adequate capital. The proceedure outlined below allows players not in possession of a starship to engage in trade by buying goods and chartering transport to a specified market.

BUYING THE GOODS

Players purchase goods according to the proceedure described in book 2, pp 42-44. A character searching for goods to purchase may consult the trade and speculation table three times per week, provided he or she does not perform any other major activity that week. If a character does something else during that week (another job, searching for a proper ship, and so on), the referee should reduce the number of times the player may consult the table. DMs for Bribery and Admin skills apply, as per book 1.

SEEKING A CARRIER

Once a player has purchased a consignment of goods, he or she must decide where it is to be shipped. The player need not ship the same week the goods are purchased; they may be warehoused. The referee should work out a proper fee for such storage, such as .01% of the base price of the goods per week.

Each week a player seeks a carrier, the referee should roll 2D, DM-1 if in a B class starport, -2 if C, -4 if D, -6 if E and -8 if X. There is no DM for A class. The resulting number is the number of ships looking for cargo in that port that week. The referee then determines the types of ships by consulting the type of ship table. Military vessels are not considered on the table, as they do not carry cargo.

Type of Ship Table

Starport Type:	DIE ROLL				
A	2	3-4	5-6	7-9	10-12
B	2	3-5	6-8	9-10	11-12
C	2-3	4-6	7-10	11	12
D	2-3	4-5	6-10	11-12	–
E	2-4	5-10	11-12	–	–
X	2-7	8-11	12	–	–
	Scout	*Yacht*	*Free Trader*	*R Class Subsidized Merchant*	*M Class Subsidized Merchant*

Example: If a player is in a B starport seeking a carrier, the referee rolls two dice and an 8 is the result. 8-1=7: there are seven ships in port that week looking for cargo. Rolling two dice seven times (once for each ship) gives results of 10, 8, 3, 12, 9, 7, and 8. Comparing these results with the table shows that there are one yacht, three free traders, two R type subsidized merchants and one M class subsidized merchant in port that week.

After finding the number and type of ships in port, the referee must determine the cargo space available on each ship, and the willingness of the ship's captain to go to the destination the player desires. (a player must designate one destination per consignment of goods). The player informs the referee what cargoes are being shipped and where they are to go. The referee then rolls 2D for each ship in port. DM's of -2 if scout, -9 if yacht, -4 if free trader, -8 if R or M class subsidized merchant. If the modified result is zero or less, the ship has all cargo space filled up. If the modified result is 1 or more, roll to determine if the ship's captain is willing to travel to the desired destination. The player must equal or exceed the number of the cargo determination determined above in order for the ship to be bound for the desired destination.

If the modified result is 1 or more, and the ship's captain is willing to travel where the player desires, that number multiplied by 10 is the percentage of the total cargo space on that ship available for use.

In the example cited above, for instance, if a player has a 12 ton consignment and wishes to ship it to a specific destination, the following occurs:

Yacht: A 10 is rolled. 10-9 = 1. A second roll is made with 2D and a 6 is rolled. As 6 is greater than 1, the yacht will go to the desired destination. As 1 x 10 =10%, and 10% of 13 = 1.3, the available space on the yacht is 1.3 tons.

Free Trader A: A 9 is rolled. 9-4 = 5, on the second roll a 7 is rolled. As 5 x 10 = 50%, and 50% of 82 = 41, the available space on free trader A is 41 tons.

Free Trader B: A 7 is rolled. 7-4 = 3, the second roll is 4. As 3 x 10 =30%, and 30% of 82 = 24.6, the available space on free trader B is 24.6 tons.

Free Trader C: An 8 is rolled. 8-4 = 4, the second roll is 2. As 2 is less than 4, the captain of free trader C is not willing to travel to the destination the player wants.

M Class Subsidized Merchant: A 4 is

rolled. 4-8 = -4, no available cargo space.

R Class Subsidized Merchant A: A 6 is rolled. 6-8 = -2, no available cargo space.

R Class Subsidized Merchant B: A 9 is rolled, 9-8 = 1. The second roll is a 9. As 1 x 10 = 10% and 10% of 200 = 20, the available space on R Class Subsidized merchant B is 20 tons.

The player could ship the consignment on any of the free traders, or one of the R subsidized merchants. The yacht is too small to contain the entire shipment, but the player could split the shipment if the nature of the cargo permits. The other two subsidized merchants are either full up or are headed for a different destination than that which the player desires. (Subsidized merchants run set routes, and are less likely to go to the destination desired unless it happens to be on their regular run).

The cost of shipping the cargo is Cr1000 per ton or 1% of the base price of the goods per ton, whichever is greater. Thus, the cost of shipping 12 tons of textiles would be Cr12,000, while the cost of shipping 2 tons of cybernetics parts would be Cr5000 (250,000 x .01 = 2500 x 2 = Cr5000).

SELLING THE GOODS

Selling is accomplished as per book 2, pp 42-44. When goods are sold, someone must be present to conduct the sale for the owner of the goods. This may be a player (either the speculator or his authorized agent) or a non-player (such as a broker, see book 2, p 43.) hired for the purpose.

Example: A player is on Reston, (B starport, non-industrial) and engages in trade. As the week is spent looking for goods and searching for a ship to transport them, the player may only consult the Trade and Speculation Table twice. The goods available are two ATV's and three tons of pharmaceuticals. The ATV's have a favorable resale DM on agricultural planets, and the nearest planet (Capon) is agricultural. The player purchases the two ATV's. The base price of ATV's is Cr3,000,000 each, but the player obtains them for 80% or Cr2,400,000 (a roll of 5 on the actual value table, book 2, p 42).

The referee determines that there are four ships in port, a scout and three free traders. Free trader I has 16.4 tons available, free trader II 24.6 tons free trader III 8.2 tons and the scout 1.2 tons. Since the player cannot split the two ATV's into less than two parts, and an ATV weighs 10 tons, the scout cannot be used, even for a split shipment. For the same reason, niether can free traders I or II. Free trader III is the only choice that week.

The shipping cost is Cr3000 per ton (3,000,000 x .01/10 = 3000 per ton, which is greater than 1000 per ton) or Cr6000 total. At the destination, the buyer employs a +3 broker to handle the sale and receives a price of 130% or Cr3,900,000 (a roll of 7 on the actual value table, plus the broker's DM of 3, for a final result of 130%). The broker's fee is 15% of the final sale price, or Cr585,000).

To sum up, the player buys two ATV's at Cr240,000 each, spends Cr6000 transporting them to market, and spends Cr585,000 for a broker who sells the ATV's for Cr3,900,000 each. The player ends up with Cr6,729,000 more than he started with.

Additional complications, such as exchange rates, customs duties, black markets, and so on may be added at the referee's option.

— Loren K. Wiseman

The Umpire Strikes Back

The **Traveller** referee is a curious phenomenon indeed. Possessed of omnipotent and godlike powers over a universe of his own creation, he is yet a victim of the players who surround him, continually threatened by their varied responses (or lack thereof) to his actions and rulings. This unstable situation can be an unsettling experience, for it is upon the referee's success or failure that everyone's enjoyment of the game hinges. . . and he must walk a tightrope in order to avoid the extremes of undo harshness or duli leniency. It is necessary to take the players in a direction that you have already mapped out for them, but in such a way as to make the game exciting, challenging, and enjoyable. This is the mark of a good referee.

While the generation of a universe and of characters is an important part of the referee's duties, the chores he faces do not end with the final pre-game die-roll. They are only just beginning! As the characters prepare themselves to venture forth, the referee must begin the delicate task of creating, balancing, and conducting an adventure. And as he does so, he must keep several points in mind.

First, the adventure must be suitable. An ex-army colonel should not be placed in a situation that requires piloting skill. . . and should not be offered a spaceship as his reward. . . unless there are other characters in the group with the requisite skills required. For this reason, if for no other, characters should be generated before the adventure is mapped out. This saves on the number of conspicuously inappropriate adventures you end up running.

The wants, needs, and desires of the characters should also play some part in determining the suitablity of the adventure. But those needs are not paramount, and should not all be filled at once . . . or the characters will have no reason to adventure later on. As a matter of fact, it will often be necessary to go against the players when their objectives become incompatible with running an exciting game. The player who doesn't want to get involved will have to be nudged— perhaps by being kidnapped or marooned by accident. And the player who is too ambitious should meet up with all sorts of trouble, from accidents to government interference or any other form of frustration that will keep him off the track of wanting to be Galactic Overlord after the first week. Hopefully these methods will steer the adventure right back to the path you first set him down.

Another consideration is the reward. As mentioned before, it should be appropriate, or the player will be foolish to accept it. The prospect (which may not all be fulfilled) of a gain large enough to interest the character must exist, unless the character has been established as the sort of fellow who wants to go out and adventure just for the fun of it. But the player with millions of credits isn't likely to risk life and limb for a paltry hundred thousand or so without some good reason. And if the reward you have in mind doesn't interest a player (and you don't want to increase it) then build in other motivations. The character may find his starship impounded, or a price on his head. . . anything that might threaten him, but which the adventure will change or correct. Motivation is truly an important part of your job as referee; it keeps the game moving even when

players hesitate about being involved in some particular action.

Most important of all, however, is the need to balance complexity in the adventure. This is more difficult in **Traveller** than in the fantasy role-playing games which preceded, as they arbitrarily provide levels of skill and levels of enemies which are challenging at each degree of difficulty while not presenting impossibilities. In **Traveller** the referee must do his own balancing, but a little common sense can usually supply most of what you need.

The characters can almost always supply many of the clues. If you know for a fact that the characters will need to have computer skill to solve the problem presented by their mission, then make sure one of your characters has the skill. If none of them do, they should have the chance to find out what they need to know before they are actually confronted with the problem, giving them time to hire someone with the required skill, perhaps.

Rumors are the key way of balancing in this fashion. While many of them will be red herrings designed to trap or confuse the players, they should be set up so that astute players will know what to prepare for. Rumors can channel the course of play into an area the referee desires; they can discourage players who want to try something the referee isn't ready for; and they are ideal clues that should lead characters to the solutions to their problems.

Other ways of balancing play can come through non-player characters, through which the referee can inject knowledge or skills not available to the players. The descriptive powers of the referee can also be used to balance a situation, by giving verbal clues to what lies ahead based on "observations' by the characters.

If all else fails, though, the referee has one last recourse. Direct and godlike intervention, in the form of good or bad fortune, can ensure that the complexity of the scenario will always challenge the players. The character who has proven totally unprepared can get lucky and escape from almost certain disaster; the characters who go out loaded down with enough gear to take on the Imperial death star might find a streak of ill fortune disrupting "the best laid plans of mice and men."

As an example, suppose a party of adventurers has armed themselves with every imaginable weapon, plus grav belts and combat armor. Their opponents are numerous, but uncivilized, barbarians. There is no danger to the travellers, who can fly out of reach and slaughter natives left and right. This kind of situation might satisfy a few closet nazis, but it won't be much of a fun or balanced game.

But the referee can reach forth, and Behold! Ill fortune strikes! A poorly maintained grav belt fails, and its owner drops gently (or not so gently) to ground, into the midst of a group of very frustrated and rude natives. Now a contest that was, essentially target practice, takes on a new and vivid interest for all concerned, especially the chap who suffered the misfortune! There are other considerations the players must take into account, now, as they continue play. Do they rescue the victim? Negotiate? Hope he escapes? Go on their way? Little incidents like this can be used to make the adventure flow

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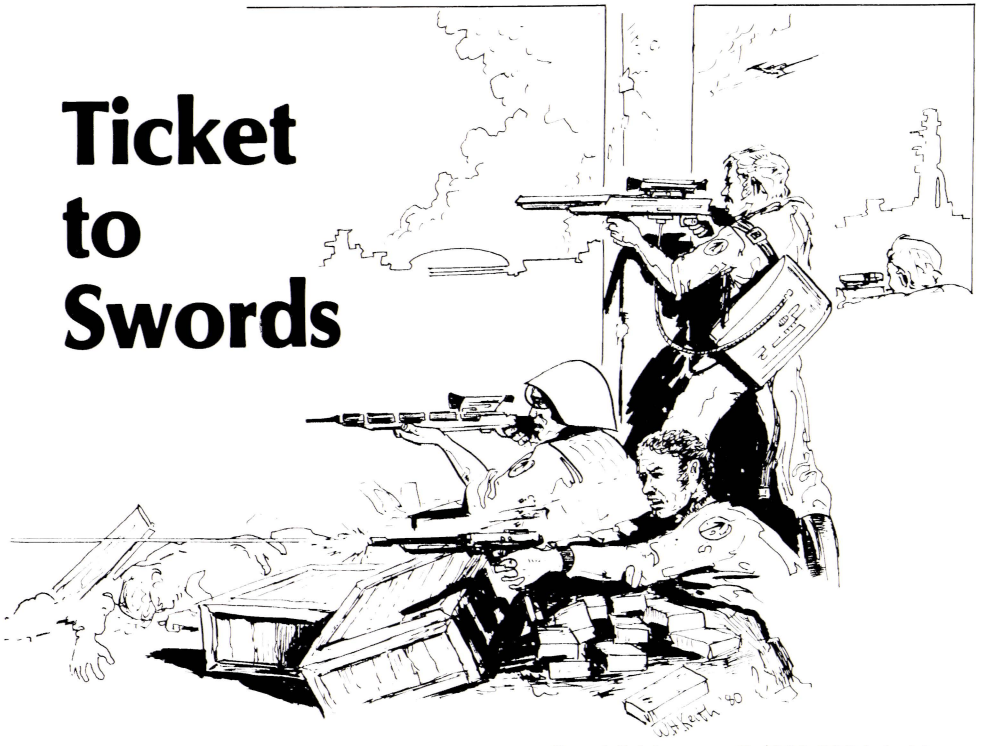
Ticket to Swords



Gunn, the world the mercenary unit is currently on, after a long and bitter struggle, is finally in the last stages of unification. Regrettably, the unit fought against the victorious power, whose intrigues have led to the abrogation of the repatriatian bond. Furthermore, credible sources indicate that the winning hegemony intends to prosecute all mercenary contingents on trumped-up charges of atrocities and other violations of the Imperial Code of War. The unit does not possess sufficient funds to secure transport off-planet, and desertions are increasing.

A factor proposes the performance by the force of a cadre/security mission in exchange for deliverance from the present predicament. His nation, Brunhild, also promises standard salaries during the periods the force is training the local conscripts, and double standard salaries when on security missions.

Brunhild is a small (200,000 inhabitants) nation on Joyeuse/Sword Worlds (0303-B-464778-A). The rightful government is being challenged by insurgents. Frankly, the rebels are well armed, being able to purchase modern weapons in other countries on Joyeuse, and a tough campaign is envisioned.

Amber Zone

Brunhild plans eventually to field a force of 2000, with 5000 reservists. The mercenary commander will determine the schedule for training. One stipulation is that local officers must be phased into command of the Brunhild troops as quickly as feasible. Brunhild suggests that while, at least at first, the mercenaries will lead the conscripts in guerilla supression actions, the native officers serve as assistants until they are deemed prepared to assume full

leadership responsibilities in their respective units.

Initially, the mercenary unit will be heavily committed to counter-insurgency operations in Brunhild's highlands, close rugged country ideal for ambush. Gradually, the trained levies will assume more of the burden of the search and destroy patrols and completely replace the unit when the mercenary force commander judges them ready.

Payment will be off-world passage and Cr 750,000, with a bonus of Cr 500,000 if turnover is accomplished within a standard Imperial year.

Referee's Information:

Brunhild's agent sketched a gloomy picture in the hope of convincing the mercenaries of his honesty. Actually, the situation is much worse. The current government gained power quite recently by a bloody coup, and is not recognized by its neighbors. The survivors of the legal government are heading a popular insurrection. The rebels are well armed and led. However, the other rather indifferent nations of Joyeuse are not the source of clandestine aid, as implied by the Brunhild representative.

Imperial traders, in an attempt to penetrate the Sword World's markets, were murdered by the illegitimate present regime. A merchant's organization, unable to gain redress, (other than the classification of Brunhild as an amber zone) from the Imperium's forces, has supplied the rebels almost exclusively. Thus, the mercenaries will have at most one tech level over the rebels.

The quality of the native forces raised and placed under the player's command will depend upon the instruction received, but in any case, their effectiveness is hampered by low morale amongst the lower ranks and the presence of a large number of political hacks in the officer positions. The exception is a company of parliamentary guards, equipped to the same standards as the mercenary unit, which will be loyal and formidable, but which will not be under the authority of the mercenary commander. The guard company will deeply resent the presence of the mercenaries, and cooperation between the two units will be minimal. The mercenaries will not learn of the true situation on the planet until after they have landed, at which time the officers of the mercenary contingent will be briefed on conditions.

Shortly after landing, the insurgents will contact the unit and urge them to join the revolution. They will argue that the present government is not recognized by any power, that the duplicity of that regime and fraudulent nature of the contract should be evident, and that the contract is thus null and void. Besides, once victory is achieved, the disposed despots will not be in a position to legally harass them.

Subsequent events shoud be determined by the referee.

— Roberto Camino

CONTACT! Vargr

Inhabiting a region rimward of the Imperium, the Vargr were for years a puzzle to Imperial xenologists. The Vargr biochemistry and genetic makeup is almost identical with a number of terrestrial animals, but differs radically from most of the flora and fauna indigenous to Lair, the purported Vargr home world. Indeed, the Vargr are barely able to digest the protein of most of the animals native to Lair. Researches during the early years of the Third Imperium concluded them to be the result of genetic manipulation of a transplanted species, undoubtedly of Terran origin, and most closely related to Terran canines. A tremendous body of data indicates that the race known as the Ancients were probably responsible.

Physically, the Vargr are not very impressive. The typical Vargr is about 1.6 meters in height and weighs approximately 100 kilograms. They are upright bipedal carnivores, rear limbs digitigrade, with hands very similar in size and appearance to those of a human, although there are significant internal differences. They have approximately the same physical parameters as humans and are able to use the same equipment without modification or additional instruction.

On the average their reactions are slightly faster than those of the average human, but individuals vary widely. The Vargr senses of smell and sight are superior to humans.

SOCIETY

Knowledge of Vargr social institutions is limited, based solely on intercourse with the nations of the frontier interface, but indicates a society, or more properly group of societies, characterized by endemic and rapid social change.

The key elements shaping Vargr societies are very strong centrifugal force resulting from an emphasis on consensus and informal lines of authity, and an equally strong centripetal force resulting from ingrained family-

clan-tribe-nation loyalty.

Centralized authority is extremely limited at the upper levels of Vargr society, and actions are based on broad coalitional concerns, with a constant splitting and rejoining of dissident factions. Traditionally, this has made it very difficult for more centralized and organized societies such as the Imperium to deal on a meaningful basis with what passes for Vargr states.

GOVERNMENT

There is no central Vargr government, indeed, there is no governmental type that can be said to be "typically Vargr." Every conceivable form of governmental organization can be found somewhere in the Vargr extents. The only cohesive force in the Extents is a fierce racial pride which causes a tendancy towards racial co-operation amongst Vargr.

As was mentioned above, the higher the level of the Vargr government, the more unstable it becomes because of the difficulty of obtaining consent of all Vargr involved.

VARGR IN THE EMPIRE

While only a few planets populated completely by Vargr exist within the Imperium, there are millions of Vargr considered to be citizens of loyal subject planets. Additionally, Vargr adventurers, criminals, mercenaries and (rarely) traders can be found throughout the rimward reaches of the Empire.

PLAYING THE VARGR

Players who wish to run Vargr characters will not encounter significant problems adjusting. Almost any behavior is permissible, and a great degree of inconsistancy is almost required.

As mentioned above, the Vargr have little respect for formal authority, less and less the higher the authority is. Vargr generally have more respect for more informal authority figures, and are more likely to obey superiors if they are aquainted than if they are strangers.

The Vargr have an intensive racial pride, and are easily insulted. They are prone to enter into fights without regard for possible consequences.

Vargr social organization is difficult to characterize in Terran terms, but can be most closely compared to the Dakota Sioux of North America in the 19th century, if the analogy is not pressed too far. Even amongst the most stable Vargr governments, a highly charismatic leader can attract followers for almost anything. The neighbors of the Vargr are constantly the subject of impromptu raids and scattered piracy by bands of Vargr (totally without government sanction, of course) who have been talked into a raid, a battle, or a war by a charismatic leader.

REFEREEING VARGR

Vargr characters are generated in the same manner as human characters, with the following modifications:

Subtract one from the strength and endurance rolls, to reflect the smaller size of the Vargr and add one to their dexterity. All other attributes are rolled for in the same manner.

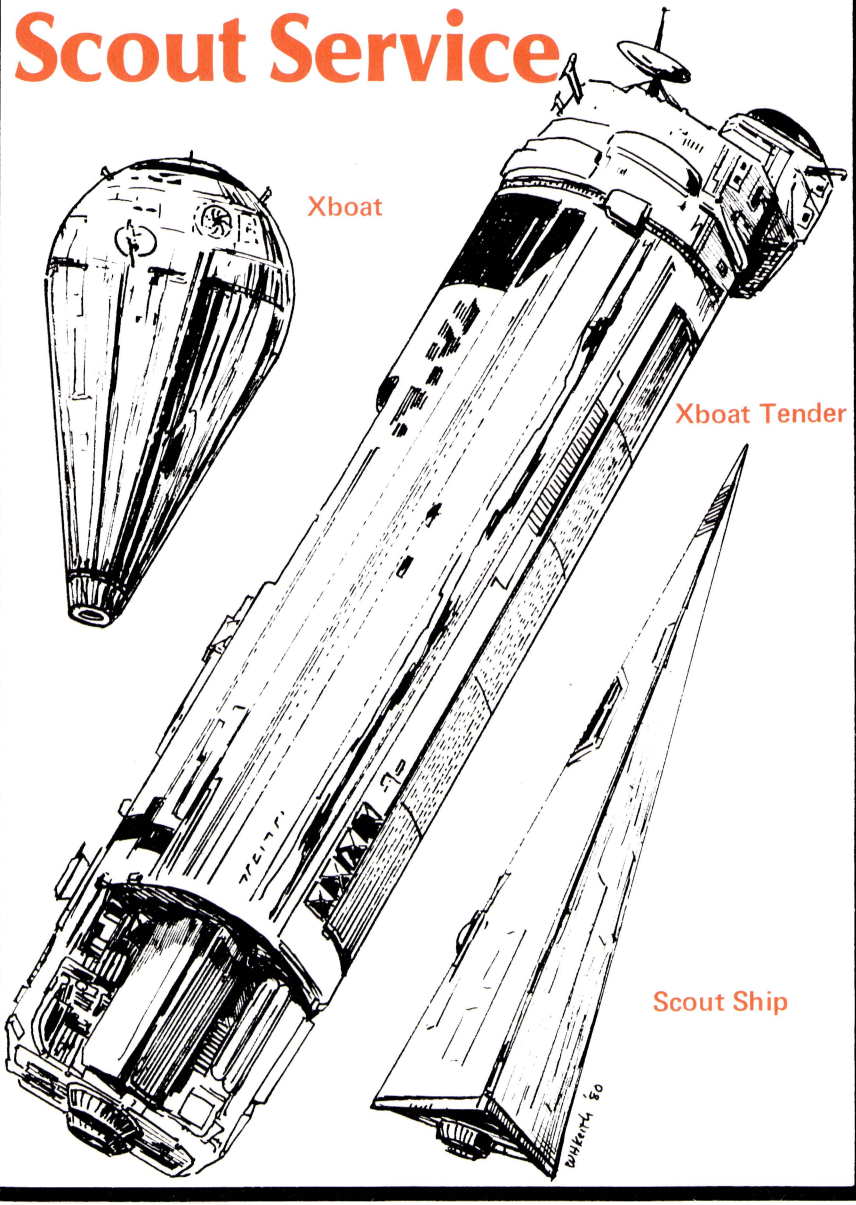
The referee should note that the Vargr are very similar to humans in all respects, but physically are slightly weaker (in close combat, they cannot punch, grapple, or kick). They are capable of great bursts of speed for short periods, but their endurance gives out fairly quickly and they are slower than humans in the long haul.

Vargr may enlist in any service but are subject to a -2 DM when attempting to enter the merchant service.

Vargr may acquire any skill or benefit without modification.

— Loren K. Wiseman

The Imperial Interstellar Scout Service



In the last century before the end of the Long Night, the Sylean Federation began its coalescence into a power wielding state.

A major arm in this move was the Sylean Federation Scout Service. The SFSS was established with two main functions: first, the exploration of neighboring regions and contact or recontact with their inhabitants; and second, the use of the advanced Sylean technology to lure planets into the federation.

Largely due to the efforts of the scouts, the Sylean Federation rapidly turned into an empire— the Third Imperium, and the Sylean Federation Scout Service became the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service (IISS).

Over the centuries, the IISS became a major service of the Imperium, equal in stature to the navy and army. With the passage of time, the exploration and recontact function of the service was severely diminished. Naturally, the IISS found other jobs to do— to maintain its numbers and budget. There are currently seven offices in the IISS:

THE SURVEY OFFICE

The function of the survey office is to consistently map all areas of the Imperium (stars, worlds, planetoids, and all hazards to interstellar and interplanetary navigation), to constantly correct and update these maps as often as is necessary, and to place and maintain directional beacons and other aids to navigation.

In addition to mapping the Imperium, the survey office also sends mapping parties outside the empire.

THE DETACHED DUTY OFFICE

The detached duty office was created to keep track of all retired and detached scout personnel in order to be able to swiftly recontact them and return them to active service in an emergency. In addition, the detached duty office controls all surplus IISS craft (scouts and couriers), making them available to some ex-scouts.

The Intelligence Branch: The IB recruits ex-scouts (and others) for duty as covert intelligence operatives throughout the Imperium and beyond. The reports of these operatives, as well as the logbooks of each ex-scout (which must be presented each time the ship services at a scout base) provide a major source of information for the Imperium.

THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

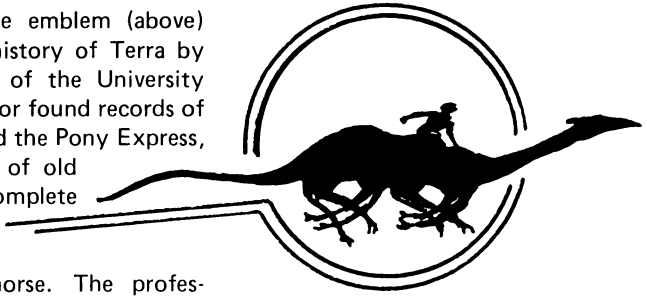
The communications office operates the xboat and courier services.

The xboat network was established to provide for the fastest possible transmission of information for official, commercial, and private purposes.

Xboats: The ships of this network have been specifically designed for the job, and are not really suited to any other duty. Each contains a pilot's compartment, message data banks, powerful broadcasting equipment, and jump drives permitting up to Jump-4. Space is so cramped aboard the xboats that they do not even contain maneuver drives. A ship makes its jump, relays its messages to the station immediately upon arrival by means of a high-speed, tight-beam radio transmission, and then waits to be picked up and towed into the xboat station by a specially built xboat tender, where it will be refuelled, refitted, and prepared for its jump to the next destination.

Meanwhile, the station records the messages and rebroadcasts them to one or more waiting xboats which then jump to other destinations. The operation is something like the ancient Terran pony express, and provides the fastest possible facsimile information transfer between worlds.

The xboat service emblem (above) was taken from a history of Terra by Professor Dinimbue of the University of Sylea. The professor found records of an organization called the Pony Express, but her knowledge of old anglic was not complete enough to equate the word pony with the Terran horse. The professor translated the word as poni, a beast of burden used on several worlds of the Sylean Federation. When the xboat service was organized, the emblem was designed, even though by then the professor's mistake had been discovered.



Xboat Stations: An xboat station is usually located near the edge of a system, where it can pick up the information beamed to it from incoming xboats with the smallest possible delay. The station contains receiving and rebroadcast equipment, to receive the xboats transmissions and send them in turn to other xboats and to the populated world(s) of the system. An xboat station contains facilities for refuelling and repair of the xboats and their tenders, as well as quarters for the pilots and the staff of the station.

Way Stations: Major overhaul of xboats is done at way stations, located along the xboat network. Way stations are equipped to perform drive overhauls and other maintenance operations beyond the abilities of the smaller xboat stations. One way station is provided for every eight to ten xboat stations.

The Imperial Courier Service: The ICS is charged with the transportation of items which cannot be transferred by xboat for security reasons and with the swift transportation of important government personnel. Normal type S scout ships are used, in addition to specially built couriers, which have been stripped of all cargo space and all but two cabins for maximum fuel storage.

The ICS also maintains communications with diplomatic missions to extra-Imperial regions with which the empire has relations. Travel by the ICS is restricted to the most vital Imperial personnel and materiel.

THE EXPLORATION OFFICE

Exploration Branch: This branch carries on the original purpose of the IISS . . . to explore beyond the borders of the empire and record what is discovered there. For this purpose, the exploration branch maintains many ship types not normally seen in other IISS duties, such as laboratory ships, free traders, cruisers, and several larger vessels. The normal type S scout vessels are not often used for deep exploration, but can be found conducting surveys, mapping, and other such activities for the EB.

Contact and Liaison Branch: Originally charged with the duty of locating, making first contact with, and maintaining friendly relations with non-human intelligent races. As the Imperium expanded, this office was given the additional duty of acquainting the various races of the Imperium with the cultures of each other and smoothing over the inevitable conflicts which arise between different cultures.

An additional duty of the C & L branch is the controlled dissemination of technological information to backward worlds within the Imperium and to bring them up to Imperial standards slowly enough to insure that

minimal cultural shock due to a too rapid expansion of technology results.

THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

The admin office contains the bureaucracy which keeps the IISS functioning smoothly.

Personnel: The personnel branch maintains the service records of all scouts and ex-scouts, hires and retires scouts, and transfers members of the service from one part to another as the need arises.

Payroll: The payroll branch is reponsible for payment of salaries, pensions, bonuses, and other rewards to the members of the IISS.

Procurement: This branch buys all equipment and material required by the IISS, from uniforms and microfilm readers to starships.

THE OPERATIONS OFFICE

Operations is responsible for the everyday functioning of all branches of the scout service. The operations office runs all scout bases, way stations, and other facilities of the IISS.

Maintenance Branch: This branch is charged with keeping all equipment in the service in good running order, and with repair and refitting of such surplus ships in the hands of ex-scouts as may be presented to a scout base.

Security Branch: This branch is in charge of protecting all facilities and personnel of the IISS from harm. Agents of the IISS security branch have the widest powers of any Imperial law enforcement agency.

THE TECHNICAL OFFICE

This office carries out tests and experiments on subjects as diverse as ship designs, drives, weapons, and FTL communications in order to constantly improve the quality of equipment used by the IISS.

THE IISS AT WAR

During time of war or other declared emergency, the detached duty office locates and recalls to service all suitable ex-scout personnel. The duties these ex-scouts are assigned to depends upon the nature of the emergency. A breakdown of the various duties is given below:

The survey office continues its duties, and additionally is charged with the provision of maps, charts, and other navigational aids covering the area of expected hostilities. The office is augmented by ex-survey office personnel.

The Detached Duty office, after calling up the ex-scouts, reduces itself to a skeleton organization and assigns its personnel to other duties.

The communications office, in addition to its normal duties, must keep the various arms of the Imperial military in constant communication with each other and with central headquarters. The staff of this office is heavily augmented from other offices.

All other offices are reduced to a minimum staff, and provide personnel to serve in the augmented offices. In addition, recalled scout pilots are assigned directly to army, navy and marine units to provide small craft pilots for landing craft, picket craft, and other fleet auxiliary vessels.

Recalled scouts with surplus scout craft (scout/couriers) are assigned crews, and their vessels are armed, refitted for military service and formed into scout squadrons.

These squadrons are attached to the navy, and the scouts assigned to them are transferred to naval command for the duration.

Scouts assigned to naval, army or marine units as small craft pilots, commo specialists or other duties are temporarily assigned rank in the appropriate service according to their

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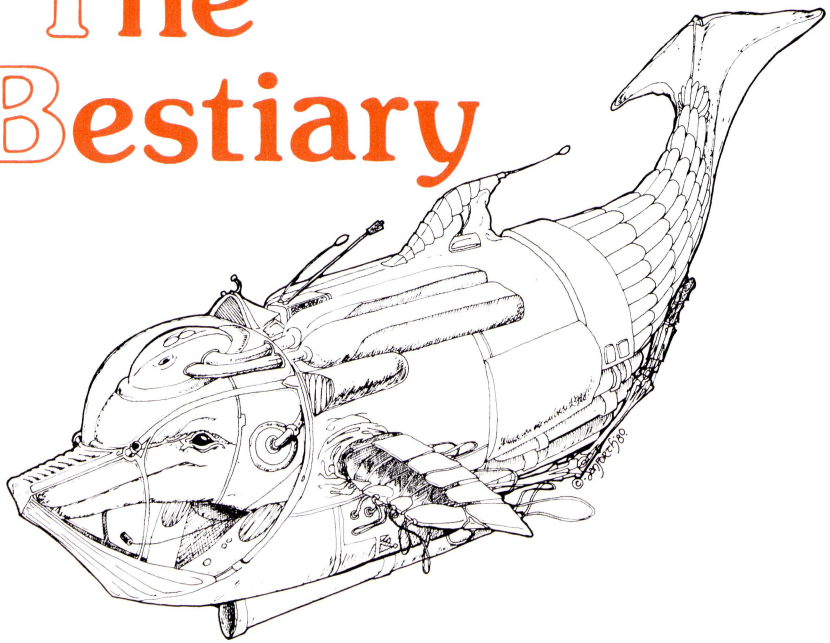
The Bestiary



Dolphin

(Tursiops galactis)

When humanity left the cradle of Terra, numerous other forms went along. Many creatures were introduced into new worlds, sometimes to supplement the local ecology and sometimes as part of an effort to create a new ecology. On worlds having extensive hydrographic cover, there was a need for creatures that could assist in the colonization and development of the oceans. Scientists settled on using the Atlantic bottlenose dolphin, enhanced by genetic engineering (or "geneering") to create a new and hardier species (T. galactis) as a partner to human settlers of these worlds. The exceptional intelligence of the dolphin allowed it to be trained in many areas of work in the ocean communities, and some worlds even went so far as to enlist them as soldiers in the local nautical force commands. These military dolphins proved to be invaluable allies as reconnaissance troops, and some are equipped with a special type of battle dress to increase their military capabilities.

The dolphin may be encountered on worlds with an atmosphere of 4-9, a hydrosphere covering 30% to 100% of the planets surface, and a minimum human population of 4 (10000). They are very similar to their terrestrial ancestor in appearance. T. galactis is about 3.7 meters long, weighs an average of 380 kgs, and has a slate grey coloration dorsally with a white ventral region. Layers of fat beneath the skin give dolphins protection equal to jack. They can achieve speeds of up to 40 kph while "cruising" through oceans waters (faster in short bursts). Being mammals, they breathe air and may remain submerged for up to 30 minutes before they need to breathe again. Dolphins are capable of breathing tainted atmospheres without a filter.

Dolphins are hunters, feeding on whatever local fauna are suited to their digestion. While they are able to deal deadly blows to larger creatures by ramming, they are friendly to humans and are almost never known to attack people without provocation. Military training may alter this generally pleasant nature. In determining reactions of dolphins when encountering a party of humans a DM of +2 is applied if the roll is 6 or less. The DM is +1 if the dolphin(s) have been given military training. If attacked, dolphins will defend themselves regardless of their initial reaction, and will flee whenever possible if outnumbered. Being intelligent, the referee should play them intelligently.

Dolphins, in the wild, form schools of 6-36. Roll 18 exactly on three dice (per member of the school) for that dolphin to have had training by humans. The females become sexually mature at age 4 and bear live young every year or two. Dolphins have been known to form pair bonds for life, and have a life span of 55 years.

The visual and auditory senses of the dolphin are highly developed, and they have excellent senses of taste as well. They have no sense of smell, being aquatic. The geneering performed on T. galactis has increased the sense of echolocation, the ability to detect objects by a form of biological sonar. The improvement allows dolphins to be highly aware of the terrain and moving objects within 100 meters of their front when submerged, and they are very difficult to surprise or ambush (DM +1 to avoid surprise).

Dolphins have limitations. While they have a limited empathic understanding of what humans may want of them, communication can be a serious difficulty. Delphinese, a simple signal/call/sign-language was developed to overcome this problem. Delphinese is understood by most dolphins unless raised completely in the wild, and there is a small chance that a feral dolphin will have learned the language. Humans may learn delphinese in a short time, (see book 4 for information on learning new skills, under instruction, p 13-14). Human instructors of delphinese are uncommon and live in coastal areas. Some dolphins can learn to speak human languages, but this ability is uncommon.

Other deficiencies of dolphins are their lack of mobility on land and the absence of manipulative organs. The latter problem was solved by genetic modification of the flippers to form short fingerlike projections at the ends which permit them to operate a specially fitted set of waldoes. Waldoes are artificial manipulative arms, which permit a dolphin to handle objects almost as well as humans. Grav belts or other mechanical devices overcome the mobility problem.

Additionally, to operate on land, a dolphin's skin needs protection from drying out and excessive exposure to sunlight.

Dolphins may develop an intelligence of D (13) and their intelligence does not decrease as they grow older. Dolphins, of course, have no rating for education or social standing among humans.

SKILLS

Dolphins have less opportunity to learn certain skills (and none at all to learn others, such as gunnery) because of their physical handicaps on dry land. What skills they do learn, however, they learn quickly and well. There is little uniformity amongst the worlds of the Imperium regarding the training and use of dolphins, so a special set of skills tables is presented for their development in Traveller. Six dice are rolled for the

BASIC SKILLS TABLE*

1	+1 Hit
2	+1 Hit
3	Brawling
4	+1 Intelligence
5	+1 Intelligence
6	Waldo Ops
7	Verbalization

CIVILIAN SKILLS TABLE*

1	Herding
2	Herding
3	Hunting
4	Brawling
5	Survival
6	Waldo Ops
7	Liaison

MILITARY SKILLS TABLE**

1	Brawling
2	Brawling
3	Recon
4	Waldo Ops
5	Tactics
6	Combat Engineering
7	Battle Dress

MUSTERING OUT TABLE

1	—
2	—
3	+1 Intelligence
4	+1 Intelligence
5	Verbalization
6	Waldo Set

** +1 if intelligence 9+.*

***+1 if tech level of homeworld 12+.*

number of hits a dolphin can take before it goes unconscious in combat and three dice are used to determine the number of hits it takes before it dies; this system is taken from the section on animal encounters in book 3, p 32. Two dice are then rolled: 9- indicates the dolphin received some civilian occupational training, and 10+ indicates it was involved in a military career in its homeworld's "wet navy". In a civilian occupation, the dolphin is assumed to have served 2-12 two year terms of service before mustering out (equal to 4-24 years). One roll may be made on the basic skills table for each two year term, and a roll on the mustering out table may be made for each term of service in excess of the first 4 terms. Dolphins start their careers at age 4, so a dolphin that served 8 terms in a civilian service would be 20 years old when mustered out, and would have eight skills rolled on the basic and/or civilian skills tables, with four rolls made on the mustering out table. DM's for the intelligence of the dolphin are applied as shown.

Martial trained dolphins will have served 6-16 terms (2D+4, equal to 12-32 years) in civilian and military positions. One roll is allowed on either the basic, civilian, or military skills tables for each two-year term served; at least four rolls must be made on the military service table. DMs for intelligence and the homeworld's tech level are applied to the rolls, and mustering out is the same as for the civilian occupations. On a roll of 12 on two dice, the dolphin has received a special award or other notice for particularly courageous or outstanding actions while in a combat situation, and may receive favorable treatment from humans it encounters. Aside from the skills learned as a result of the generation system for past experience, dolphins have no skill level in any other skills.

For every two years of a dolphin's age beyond 30 years, a saving throw of 8+ must be made to avoid loss of two hit points from the number it needs for it to go unconscious. If this number falls to zero or below due to these aging effects, the dolphin is assumed to have

fallen ill and must make a saving throw of 10+ to survive. Having survived, the dolphin gets one hit point to go unconscious. Aging effects are applied immediately after generating the dolphin's age when it musters out of service. Note that this rule applies only to aging effects, and not to wounding effects in combat. Explanation of the skills dolphins may receive is found below.

+1 Hit: This indicates that one hit is added to the number the dolphin may take before it goes unconscious.

+1 Intelligence: Self-explanatory.

Brawling: This skill betters the dolphin's chance to hit with a snout ram. Ramming inflicts four dice of damage on an opponent and is treated as a cudgel for the purposes of armor penetration and range factors. Throw 8+ to hit, DM +1 for each level brawling skill.

Waldo Ops: A dolphin fitted with waldos (artificial arms) has a low chance of using them to perform any but the simplest task. Throw 13+ each round, DM +4 per level of Waldo Ops skill.

Verbalization: This skill allows the dolphin to understand commands given in Delphinese and to better communicate with humans. A dolphin may successfully communicate with a human in Delphinese on a score of 13+, and in Anglic on 19+, DM +4 per level of verbalization. Each attempt to communicate is assumed to take one minute.

Herding: This civilian skill involves locating schools of aquatic creatures and driving them to prepared nets or enclosures. The referee should determine specific throws for success.

Hunting: This is similar to hunting skill in supplement 4 (p 12), but applies only to marine life. The referee should generate specific throws for success.

Survival: This skill is like the human survival skill (book 4, p 15) and is applied to situations involving unfamiliar oceanic "wilderness".

Liaison: This skill is used as a DM on the reaction table when the dolphin encounters humans. It may also be used as a positive DM in communicating, liaison skill giving +1 per level for success.

Recon: This is similar to a human's recon ability, and will provide positive DMs in surprise situations and in scouting enemy positions and movements. Higher levels of skill allow the dolphin to better estimate enemy strength and positions. A dolphin must have verbalization skill to receive recon; otherwise, it is treated as hunting skill.

Tactics: This is similar to the human skill, but applies to small unit actions underwater. To receive this skill, a dolphin must have verbalization skill; otherwise, treat as herding skill.

Combat Engineering: As explained in Book 4, page 11, this skill involves the proper placement of sensors and explosive devices in combat situations. Dolphins may use this skill as outlined for humans, with appropriate allowances for the marine environment. Verbalization skill is required to receive this skill; otherwise treat as survival skill.

Battle Dress: The nautical force commands of some worlds use dolphin troops equipped with a specialized form of battle dress (Type D). Type D battle dress cannot be put on a dolphin without the assistance of at least one human or two other dolphins equipped with waldos. The suit provides protection from damage as per normal battle dress, and gives full protection against waterborne poisons or waterlessness (the suit is water-filled behind the head in some models and has an atmosphere with 100% humidity in others). A set of waldos is built into the suit (receipt of battle dress skill automatically gives the dolphin Waldo Ops-1). Type D battle dress also has a sonar amplifier (range 1 km), integral grav belt, and air tanks.

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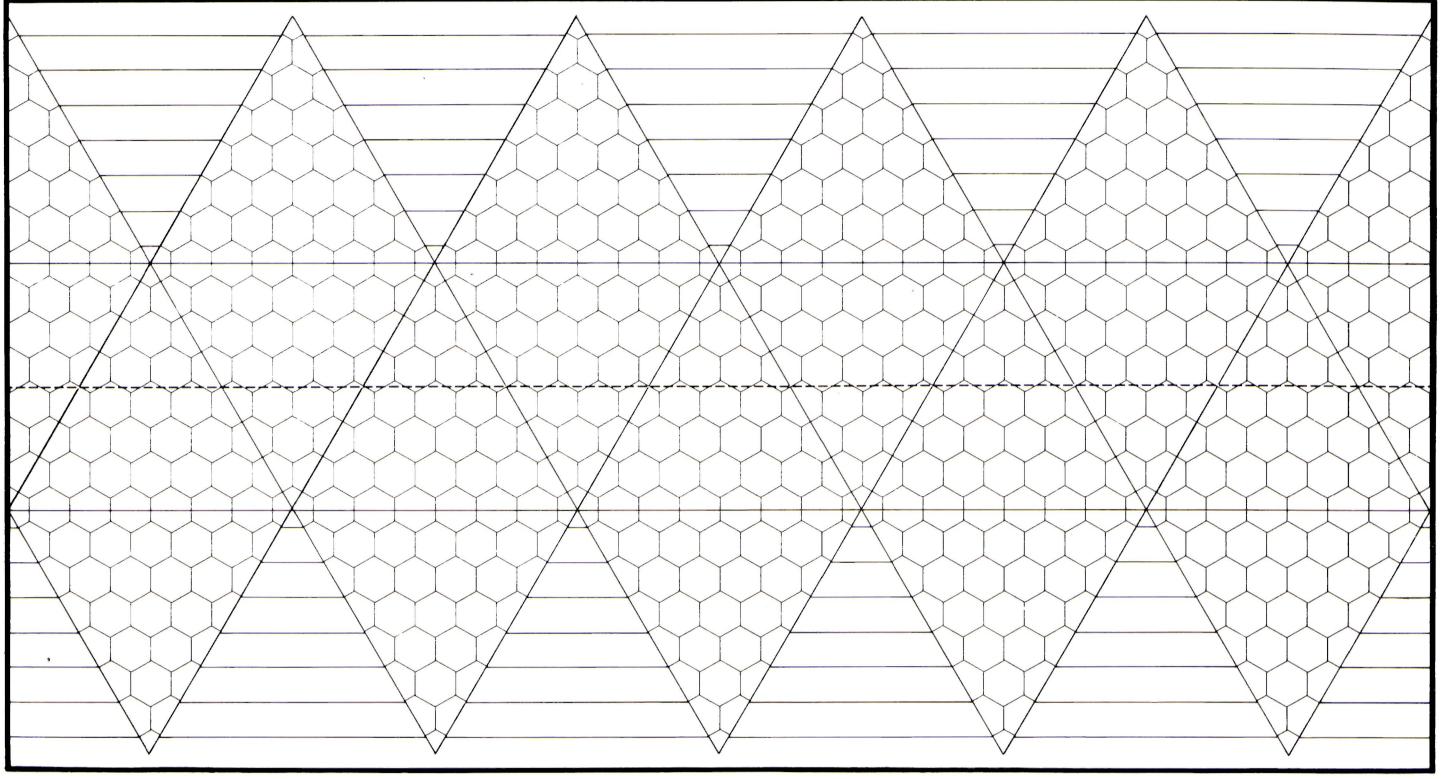
IS FORM 8

WORLD MAP GRID	1. Date of Preparation	2. World Name
3. USP	4. Hex Scale	



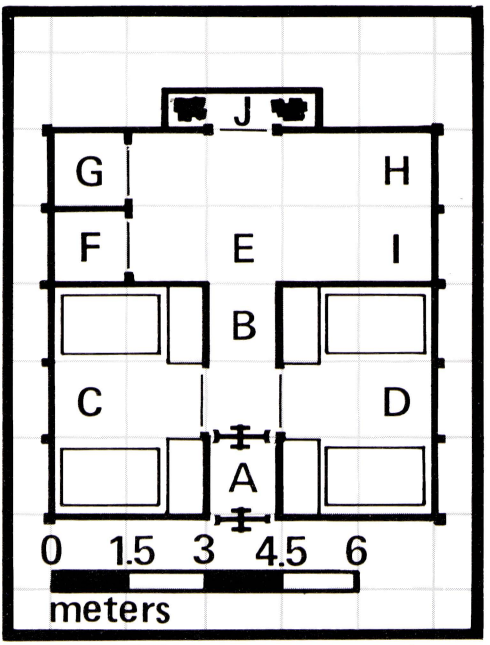
Model 317 Pressurized Shelter

In many cases, an extended expedition on the surface of an inhospitable world calls for an advanced base which can support and supply the expedition members without requiring their starship to remain. The model 317 pressurized shelter, manufactured by GSbAG (Geschichtkries Sternschiffbau, AG) is intended to respond to just this need. The shelter is a commercial variant of a shelter in use by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service, and dispenses with some scout features (such as a long range communicator, local area sensors, a heavy duty computer, and an atmosphere analyzer) in order to fit more easily into the commercial market. A tech level 8 construction, it is fully pressurized to provide standard atmospheric gases and includes a recycling system for both water and oxygen. Standing 7.5 meters square to a height of 3 meters, the construction is collapsible to 6 meters square with a height of 2 meters. For cargo hold transport, the shelter has a mass displacement of 6 tons.

The model 317 pressurized shelter is intended to provide reasonable comfort for eight persons for well over a two month stay. Two semi-private bedrooms provide bunk beds to sleep four each, while a large living area allows recreation, scientific inquiry and investigation, dining, relaxation, and exercise with a minimum of crowding.

Entry to the shelter is attained through a manual double hatch air lock (A) which features recycling pumps to minimize air loss and atmospheric contamination. Once inside, the central corridor (B) leads back to the main living area. To each side of the corridor are identical bedrooms (C and D). Each contains four single beds (bunked, to conserve space) and personal item storage.

The main living area (E) contains collapsible furniture for dining and lounging. A small galley (H) allows preparation of meals using the stored rations (I). Three small areas are situated off the main living area. The recycler (F) contains the mechanisms for both oxygen and water recycling. The fresher (G) contains the toilet, a shower, and a basin for personal needs. Finally, the power plant (J) is a self contained power source for the entire structure, providing energy for the recycler, the galley, and for heat and cooling as necessary.



Computer: A small, solid state computer of rudimentary ability is included in the shelter, and has outlets

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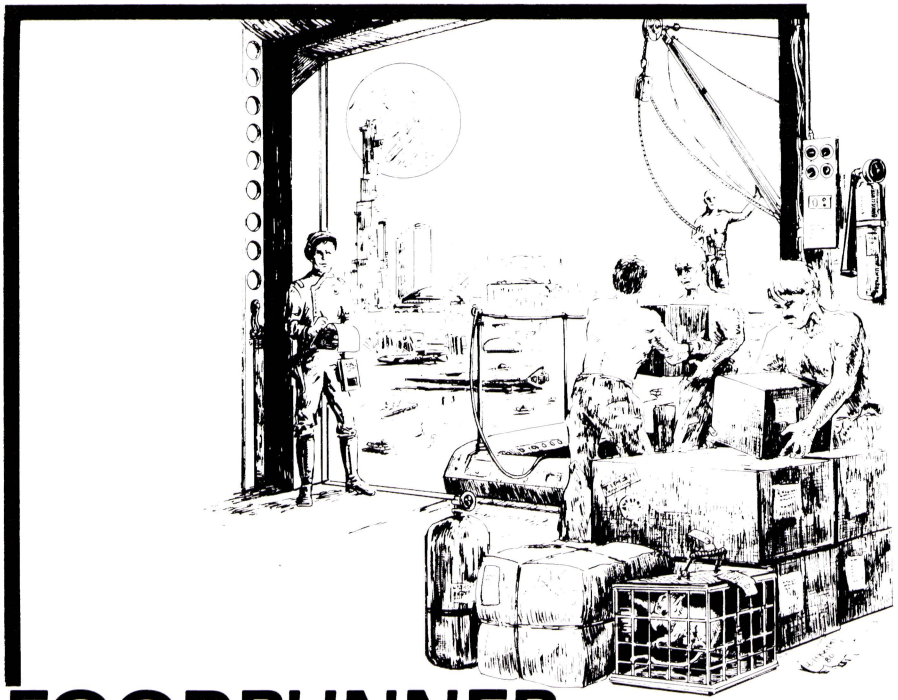


FOODRUNNER

Roup (Regina 0407-C77A9A-6) is a small, water-covered world situated along the Imperial xboat route through Regina subsector. Its history is one of strict controls by a cruel but fair dictatorship, that of the Leader. The reason for these controls is the population distribution on Roup: all of its billions of people live huddled in the cities built on the peaks of an underwater mountain range, the only dry land masses on the entire planet. The entire planet suffers from the symptoms of massive overpopulation, i.e. crowding, disease, and massive food demands. Because of the strain on Roup's economy that an off-worlder population would cause, and because of the often vicious nature of life there, Roup has been posted as an amber travel zone, and only a tiny scout base is kept there in addition to the off-world xboat link.

Roup's entire industry is geared to the feeding of the population by killing and processing of Roup's plentiful sea life into food concentrates, used as emergency rations by the Regina subsector navy, but primarily Roup's only food source. Roup stands at tech level 6, hampered by its tainted atmosphere and its people's needs, and above all else, two things are prized by its people: living space (most live in the streets) and real food.

Amber Zone

The players are approached by a middle-aged, rather vulgar person who professes to be the manager of a small shipping service that deals in both legal and illegal cargo. He needs a crew of from four to eight for an armed and renovated free trader to transport twenty tons of sealed cargo to the Roup scout base, where the officials have been

bribed to turn their backs while the natives pick up and pay for the cargo. The pay must be delivered back to the manager for the players to collect their reward, that being clear title to the free trader. the cargo consists of 200 crates, 10 kg each, containing rare foodstuffs of all sorts, including 10 kg of a highly expensive and perishable Pysadian melon, as well as a case of a very rare *trockenbeerenauslase* wine.

Referee's Information:

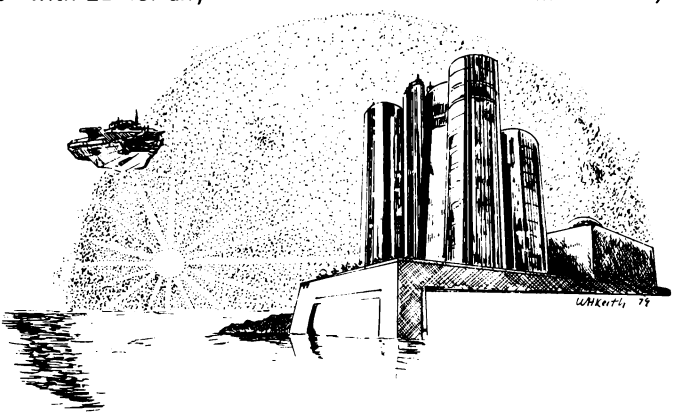
The referee can start this adventure from anywhere he or she wishes in the Spinward Marches. While at first, this job may look ridiculously easy, there are several minor details that the players don't find out until its too late . . .

First, the ship is in orbit, and the manager provides the players with a one-way shuttle ticket to its parking orbit. This way, the players can't back out of the deal when they see their reward, which is, frankly, a poor excuse for a starship, being worth a possible resale price of Cr10,000,000. All but 20 tons of its cargo space have been replaced by jump and maneuver drives B, giving the ship jump- 2 and 2G capability, more fuel tankage (80 tons), and two single turrets (two pulse lasers). However, every piece of machinery on board except the computer is in a state of disrepair (throw 8+ with 2D for any item to break down during use; as always, repair DMs are governed by mechanical or engineering skills) including the drives (which have been burning unrefined fuel and haven't been overhauled in two years). This disrepair includes such useful components as the airlock, toilet, kitchen unit and both turrets.

Second, upon landing, (assume the ship rattles a bit, but doesn't crash), the group of cargo handlers will come out onto the tiny, open type C landing field and offload the cargo. The group will consist of 111 men: 100 stevadores with concealed knives (the planet's only commonly available weapon, quite illegal), 10 guards armed with SMGs, and the overseer, a government functionary representing the Leader, who carries a revolver and a locked briefcase containing Cr40,000,000, the payment for the cargo. Food is such a valued commodity that 1D groups of criminals (number and arms up to the referee) will attempt to hijack the food and the cash. The only shelter in the area is the ship and the nearby repair shack which is occupied by scouts, who have been told to ignore what happens on the field for the next couple of hours. Nobody among the natives is armored, except the overseer, who wears a flak jacket under his coat. Needless to say, the players will almost certainly get caught in a crossfire.

Assuming they manage to get off Roup, the manager will not be pleased if they return without his money or if the lock on the briefcase is broken. Subsequent events are up to the referee.

– Mike Metlay



A DAGGER AT EFATE

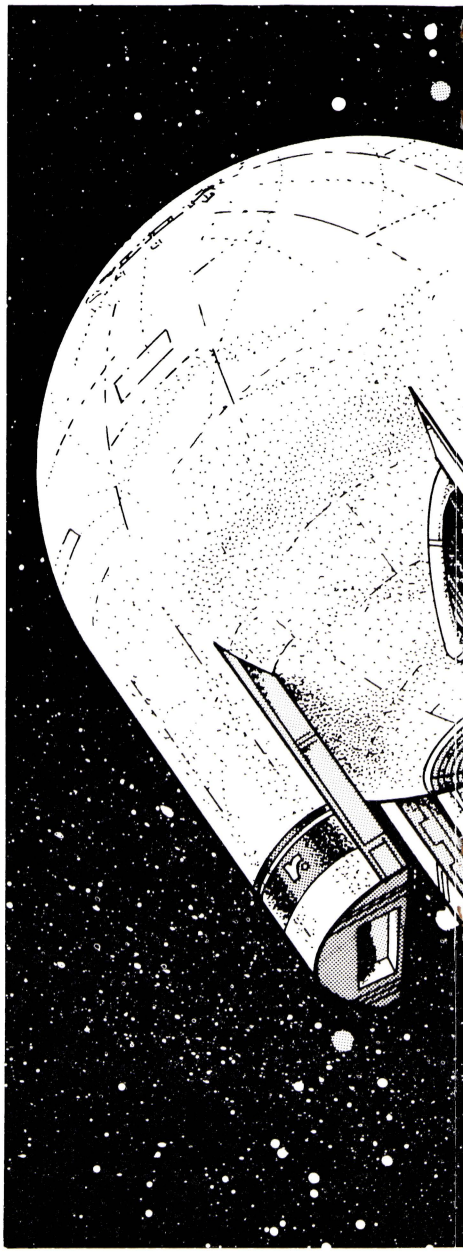
by John Lewis

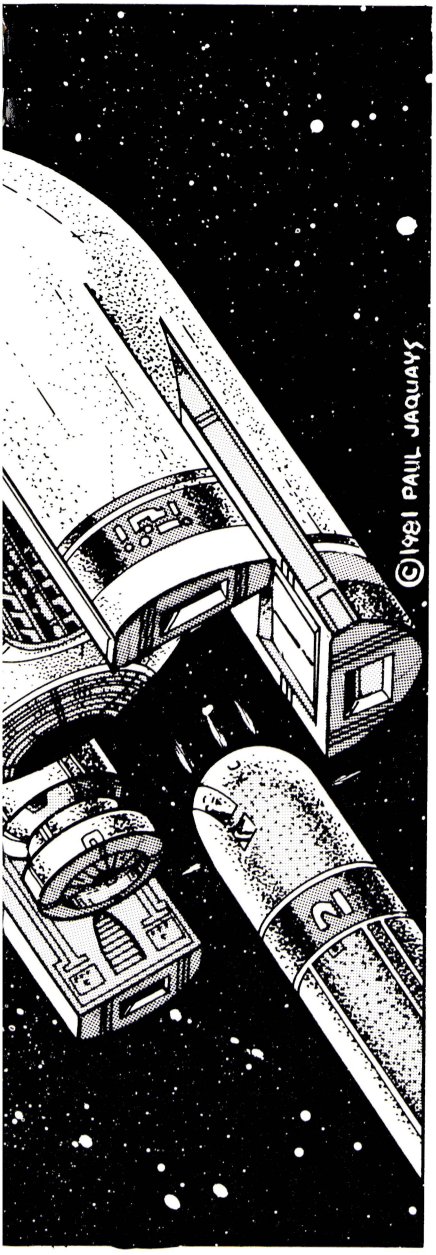
Mercenary cruiser *Dagger* was hired on an emergency basis by the Imperial Military Resource Board for supplemental operations in the Efate system of the Regina subsector in late 1106, and served on ordinary duties for several months. In early 1107, local rebels mustered forces and mounted a breakout with a rag-tag accumulation of several converted commercial ships. Fearing that this operation was a diversion meant to sap Imperial blockade forces, and yet unwilling to let the rebel task force go, Rear Admiral Santeenochev's staff dispatched several hired vessels in pursuit. Mercenary cruiser *Dagger* was one of them. It left on less than an hour's notice, leaving behind its troop unit.

The Situation: It is now four months later. Here in the Efate system, a battle is raging and the Imperial command has gradually committed every available ship to the fray. The players, aboard a merchant or scout, have just entered the system, completed all necessary identification procedures with system control, and are now proceeding toward Efate.

Amber Zone

System Control Efate now communicates that Mercenary cruiser *Dagger* has just stepped out of jump space near them, and is not acknowledging queries. It is not maneuvering, and it may be in need of help. Since all available naval vessels are engaged in the battle on the far side of the system, System control is invoking regulations to require the player's ship investigate and render assistance as required.





Referee's Information:

Dagger is lifeless and unmanned. Its operations are in the hands of a computer (and a relatively dumb one at that) which will maneuver the ship slightly to avoid docking by any ship which approaches.

Once the ship has been boarded (one suggestion is a leap using vacc suits), the group will find the ship's controls are locked and effectively unusable. Repairing the controls would take at least 36 hours.

The Problem: The ship is on a course which will take it directly to Efate. Indeed, its projected impact point is the major Imperial troop concentration on the world. The impact of this ship would be sufficient to destroy a large fraction of the Imperial troop strength committed to Efate; and even if the troops can be moved in time, large stocks of military supplies will be destroyed.

The players must alter the ship's course (preferably bringing it under control) and prevent its impact on Efate. They have a time limit of less than eight hours until they must leave the ship if they are not to share in its destruction.

The Second Problem: A five megaton thermonuclear device has been concealed aboard the ship; it is set to explode five hours after the ship is landed on any vacuum world (it is not intended to land on atmosphered worlds) or remains stationary adjacent to any ship of displacement of 1000 tons or greater. The device is well concealed, although a thorough search of the ship may reveal it.

Some Possibilities: The computer could be confused by herding it with a small ship in the direction that the players want it to go. False inputs into the ship's sensors might produce the same effects. A search for hidden control sets might reveal the presence of the thermonuclear device. Simple questions as to what this ship is doing here may set players to thinking.

Rationales: The entire matter of the *Dagger* is some sort of plot— obviously the ship was captured while on its pursuit of the rebels. The referee should be careful to include clues to that event in the form of battle scars.

SCAM

While between jobs and out in search of an evening's entertainment, the party is contacted by a distant acquaintance and taken to a secluded room where they are left alone with the occupant, a small, nervous-looking man.

The man introduces himself as Ansehlm Jotphar, a supervising clerk at a local branch of Transport Bonding and Underwriters, LIC, a local insurance firm. Jotphar has been employed by the firm for almost sixteen years, and currently supervises the receipt of premium payments. A series of personal financial reverses in the stock market required him to produce a quantity of cash, which he obtained by diverting funds from the company, intending to make up the shortage before it was detected. He has received a tip from a friend, however, which indicates that a surprise audit of all departments is to begin the next day, which will discover his misdeed and ruin him.

Jotphar asks that the group break in to the offices of TB&ULIC and destroy the computer holding the record of his crime, making the act appear to be vandalism by trashing the entire floor. He will provide the combination to the rear entrance to the building and a schedule of the security patrols in the building and the surrounding plaza.

Amber Zone

Jotphar cannot pay the group in money, but says he can arrange for the group to receive a list of every ship scheduled to leave planet within the next month with a cargo valued in excess of Cr10,000. He suggests that the group arrange to hijack one or more of these vessels.

To protect both parties, Jotphar asks the group to meet him in the same place

the same time next evening, when he will give them the list if the job has been done properly.

Referee's Information:

Jotphar's scheme is more complex than what has been outlined. The only shipment on the list he will give the players' group will be rare liquors valued at Cr10,000,000. In actual fact, the cargo is worth only Cr10,000, but a confederate of Jotphar's, an assessor for TB&ULIC, has overvalued the policy. After the players have hijacked the shipment, Jotphar will collect on the insured value of the stolen goods, split the money with his confederate, and vanish into the depths of space. The instructions he has given the players will result in the destruction of records concerning policies taken out in the last two months, including all connection between the liquor shipment and Jotphar's confederate. With luck, TB&ULIC will never find out they have been swindled.

The players will naturally be somewhat disturbed by all this, and will undoubtedly want to track Jotphar down and claim a larger reward.

The chances of the group finding Jotphar will depend on exactly how they go about tracking him. Liberal applications of cash to various interstellar passenger company clerks will probably reveal Jotphar's destination. Jotphar will be travelling under another name, and alert to pursuit.

If the players are clever in their investigations, and have a small amount of good luck, the referee should allow them to locate Jotphar. Jotphar, when found, will be in the middle of conducting a complex swindle which will have absorbed 90% of his funds. He will have spent the bulk of the rest in establishing a protective network around himself.

If the players decide to attack Jotphar, his bodyguard will protect him (the size and armament is up to the referee). If the group's actions are more moderate, Jotphar will offer them a part in the swindle, for a cut of the proceeds.

The flow of subsequent events must be determined by the referee.

— Loren Wiseman

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continued from page 7

smoothly, with everyone finding that there is a challenge facing him no matter how good, how well-equipped, or how careful he has been.

This power of the referee can be used as much or as little as necessary. Often the referee can stall the players from travelling toward a point that he has not yet prepared with exactly this kind of judicious intervention. Accidents, rumors, other missions, all can take place along the route the band is following. These delays give the referee time to get his act together and prepare for the big one. . . whatever that may be. But be careful! Let the players do some of the things they want to do, too; or they won't want to go along with you.

Of course, there is a final remedy for the recalcitrant player who won't see eye to eye with what you, as referee have decreed. Since you are, after all, playing a role yourself— a particularly powerful character, God — you have certain options which I present below for your use as needed.

A giant hand can reach out and grab their starship.

An asteroid can plunge into the ship, killing all aboard.

They can fall into a black hole.

Or, if you are a traditionalist, you can hit 'em with a lightning bolt!

Just as long as you have a good time.

— J. Andrew Keith

Pursue and Destroy

The mercenary unit is part of a number of contingents hired by Enoc su-Krang, leader of a rebel group attempting to take over the government of Pynchan (C-656795-9). The war has gone on for several months, and the loyalist forces seemed on the verge of complete and total collapse when a loyalist commando strike killed su-Krang. The rebel army began to disintegrate immediately, and most of the high rebel leadership switched sides.

The testimony of these deserters indicated (wrongly) that the mercenary units were responsible for the many atrocities committed by the rebels and the entire planet was mobilized against the off-worlders.

Since the small mercenary contingents were spread throughout the rebel army as stiffeners, most of them were quickly overwhelmed and massacred by their former allies. Several small groups of mercs escaped and must now make their way to the starport and safety.

Amber Zone

Referee's Information:

The referee must devise a map of the terrain to be covered by the fugitives. Depending on the size and weapons of the group, the referee should place a greater or lesser number of geographic and military obstacles in their way. The group should have to make its way across 300 to 500 km of hostile territory.

The group will be chased by a number of tech level 9 mechanized units (the exact number is up to the referee) and will encounter them in platoon (3-5 vehicles) strength. Enemy tanks are track-layers and mount 12cm hypervelocity smoothbores and autocannons. APCs are also track layers with auto-

WEAPON SPECIFICATIONS

Weapon:	*Short:*	*Effective:*	*Extreme:*
Tac Missile (TL-11)	4000m (65)	6000m (65)	none
Tac Missile (TL-9)	3000m (55)	4000m (55)	none
Plasma A-gun	2000m (45)	3000m (35)	5000m (25)
12cm HVSB	1500m (40)	2500m (35)	4000m (30)
4cm RAM -HEAP*	200m (22)*	400m (22)*	500m (22)*

penetration at a given range is in ()s following that range

** correction to Azhanti High Lightning weapons specs.*

VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS

(speed in Kms per hour)

Vehicle:	*Max. (sprint) Speed:*	*Cruise:*	*NOE:*	*Armor:*
Grav Tank (TL-11)	700	400	130	42
Grav APC (TL-11)	700	400	130	32
Tank (TL-9)	80	60	N/A	35
APC (TL-9)	100	70	N/A	28
Grav Sled (TL-9)	600	350	120	23

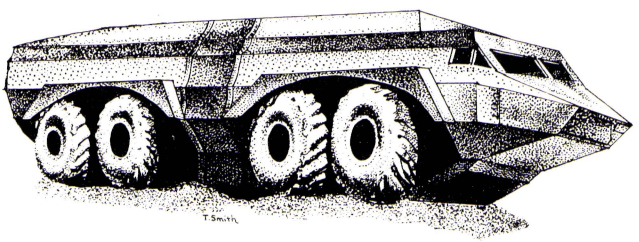
cannons and RAM auto-grenade launchers. Each APC carries a squad of 12 soldiers with 1 man-portable tac missile launcher (2 rounds), 1 RAM grenade launcher, 1 laser rifle/target designator, and 6 assault rifles. A few of the enemy units will be lift cavalry units equipped with grav sleds mounting 2 tac missiles and an autocannon (in addition to the squad mentioned above). Tanks carry a crew of four.

The players' group has a tech level 11 grav tank mounting a plasma A-gun and a tech level 11 grav APC mounting an autocannon and tac missile launcher rails (three missiles remaining). Players also have a RAM grenade launcher and a number of ACRs. Ammunition should be in short supply.

Vehicles may carry six additional passengers clinging to the outside, but these extras do not get the armor protection of the vehicle.

The referee should use *Mercenary* and the *Azhanti High Lighting* rules to run this scenario. For vehicles, a light wound = minor damage (1D6 hours to repair), serious wound = disabled (10D6 hours to repair), and death = destroyed. In addion, for minor damage, roll 1D6: 1 = speed reduced by ½; 2 = immobilized; 3 = Power out (no fire or movement); 4 = 1 crew casualty; 5 = 1 weapon disabled; 6 = no effect.

Frank Chadwick



Traveller characters will often find themselves in an urban environment and in need of rest and recreation. Indeed this is implied in the rules found in book 2 covering starship travel where starship crews are normally given a week's shore leave between voyages. Also, book 2 mentions that although crew members' room and board are supplied by the starship owner, spacehands manage to spend most of their pay anyway.

This article is a look at some ways crewmembers and others can spend their pay in pursuit of leisure activities.

Amber Zone

There are several areas generally found on a world that characters are likely to visit in search of rest and recreation.

These include:

STARTOWN

This is the area of a starport city located just outside the port's extra-territorial boundary fence. Like the waterfronts of old, startowns cater to the needs and desires of starship crewmembers, port workers, and petty criminals.

Startown is sleazy and rundown; it's considered to be the worst district of the spaceport city. Cheap taverns, brothels, hotels and gambling halls abound, wedged in among warehouses, the local ship's crew hiring hall, cargo brokers' offices, ship suppliers, passenger agents' offices, and the central cargo exchange. The city police usually maintain a large station in startown. Military units (regular and mercenary) and naval units garrisoned nearby also have police and shore patrols constantly roaming the area. Nonetheless, law enforcement authorities are overworked in startown, and overlook all but the

most serious of infractions. They are also underpaid, and susceptible to bribes.

CENTRAL CITY

The central city is the retail and business district common to most starport cities. Located at some distance from the starport, it is reachable by public transportation such as a monorail system, air or ground taxis, or other such systems, depending on local tech level and geographical conditions. Here are located the best hotels, restaurants, and stores as well as bars and night clubs. Trade related businesses such as shipping lines and import/export firms maintain offices here too. Local laws are more rigidly enforced in the central city and a higher standard of conduct and and manners is expected here than in other areas.

Accordingly, starship crews do not regularly venture into the central business district. However, ship captains, senior merchants, naval and military officers, and ship owners may enter the central city on business or seeking better lodgings, food, and entertainment than can be found elsewhere in the city. Usually, food and accomodations that would fall in the "high living" category are only found here. In addition local citizens who are acquainted with or who do business with starship captains, such as cargo brokers and exporters, frequently entertain their clients at the private gaming and dining clubs located here.

Ship's crewmembers, soldiers on liberty, and adventurers will generally seek the same things when looking for rest and recreation on virtually any world. These include a place to sleep, some good meals, relaxing refreshments, and companionship generally of the opposite sex. A good gambling game is often sought, also.

DINING

After a week of ship's food that ranges from fairly good to nearly inedible in quality, the average crewmember on liberty is hungry for a good meal. So is a mercenary who has been living on field rations, not to mention the adventurer fresh in from the bush.

As noted in book 3, ordinary meals can be purchased for Cr 10, excellent meals for from Cr20 to 50.

Ordinary meals are easily found in the cafes of startown and in the cafeterias and snack shops in the central city.

For better food, characters must take the trouble to go to the central city. Here they will find the best restaurants, however, they might not get in. Most restaurants in this part of town follow a strict code of dress and decorum with most maitres'd frowning on starship jumpsuits or camouflage battle fatigues in their establishments. Even the garish clothes sold by startown tailors won't fool the keepers of the velvet rope. Characters with a social standing of 7 or less will generally not be admitted, and in any case, tables must be reserved in advance in the best places.

Accordingly, roll 2D with the following modifiers for a reservation on a roll of 6+. DM +1 for every Cr10 tip to the maitre'd + DM of bribery skill level. DM -4 if social standing is 7 or less, seating automatic if social standing is 10+.

Cities adjacent to starports are where the best and most diverse restaurants on a planet will usually be found. This is because these restaurants have the easiest access to imported foodstuffs, and the constant traffic of off-worlders through the starport creates a demand for many varied and exotic styles of cooking.

Agricultural worlds will have the most abundant, least expensive, and

highest quality food. Industrial worlds and poor worlds are likely to feature protein concentrates grown in yeast vats as the daily staple. Natural foods are likely to be imported, and will always be very expensive, with a natural food meal costing Cr 50 or more. Natural foods here means any foods derived from plants or animals as opposed to synthetic foods grown in vats from yeast, petroleum, or similar substances.

DRINKING

Alcoholic beverages are easily available and legal on most worlds (throw 12 on 2D for prohibition) except for worlds or regions ruled by theocratic dictatorships. Drunk and disorderly characters (the exact circumstances are the referee's option) are subject to arrest according to the planet's law level. Roll the law level or less (as often as the referee sees fit) for arrest. Local police on high law level worlds are more likely to make tavern checks as well.

The cost of alcoholic beverages varies widely depending on type and quality. For instance, a shot and a beer can be had in a startown bar for Cr.75 to Cr1. A beer alone would run from Cr.5 to Cr1.5 depending on quality and location of purchase. A good bottle of wine could range from Cr5 to Cr20 for local vintages while the rare Terran wines cost ten times as much or more per bottle, if available. A rare Terran varietal or appellation controllee wine would cost thousands of credits per case. (A single bottle of vintage 1022 Hospice du Beune sold for Cr7000 in an old wine auction on Capital recently, and a bottle of Tokaj escenzia was sold on the black market for Cr12,000,000.)

Alcoholic beverages are cheapest on agricultural worlds where, in many cases, they are produced from surplus crops. They are most expensive on industrial worlds, especially sub-Terran and non-Terran worlds where they must be imported. Generally, governments find alcohol a lucrative revenue source and tax it heavily. Illegal distillation and sale of alcohol is a common occupation on many worlds. High quality beverages are likewise favorite commodities for smuggling. Import duties of 10 to 20 percent are not uncommon for alcohol unloaded at starports throughout the Imperium. (3+ on 1D for import duties on alcohol on a given world.)

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant with cumulative effects. A character who indulges should subtract one from his dexterity rating for each two glasses of beer or each glass of wine drunk per hour and should subtract two for each glass of whiskey drunk per hour. When zero is reached, the character is drunk and cannot stand unassisted. If he or she is foolish enough to continue drinking at this point, begin subtracting points in the same way from the character's endurance rating. When endurance reaches zero, the character passes out. The character will remain unconscious for 2D hours and will recover with a hangover, also lasting 2D hours. While hung over, the character will have strength, dexterity, and endurance reduced by half.

Because alcohol also inhibits judgement, apply a DM of -3 to reaction table rolls for inebriated characters. Characters arrested for violent conduct while drunk can expect to spend 1D x 10 days in the local jail and will be held financially liable for property they damage.

CRIME

Star town is a rough neighborhood where many a liberty has been ruined by crimes committed against crewmembers and other adventurers.

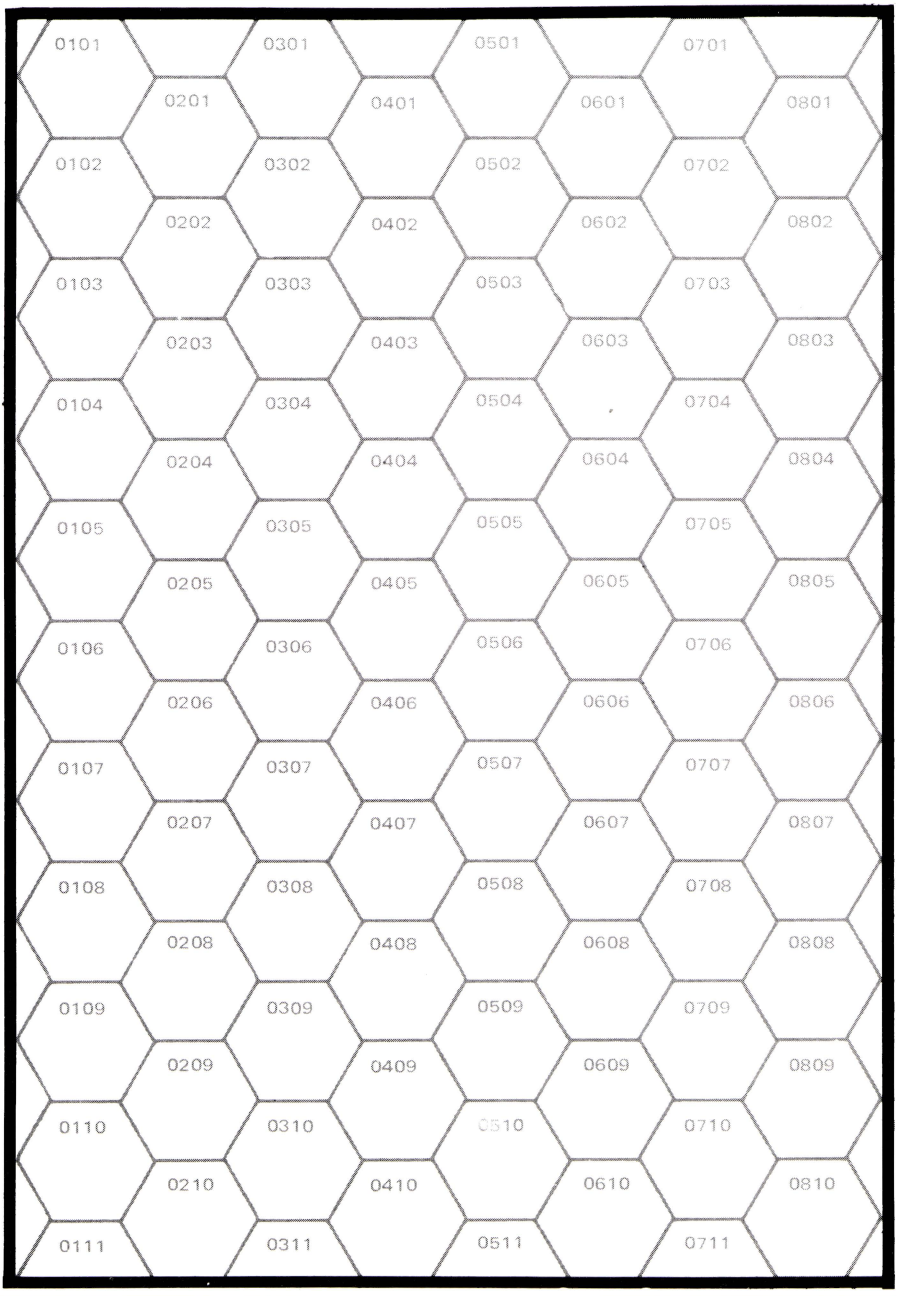
Mugging by thugs is a fairly common

continued on page 42

SUBSECTOR MAP GRID

Indicate adjacent subsectors at boundaries of this map grid.

1. Subsector Name	2. Date of Preparation



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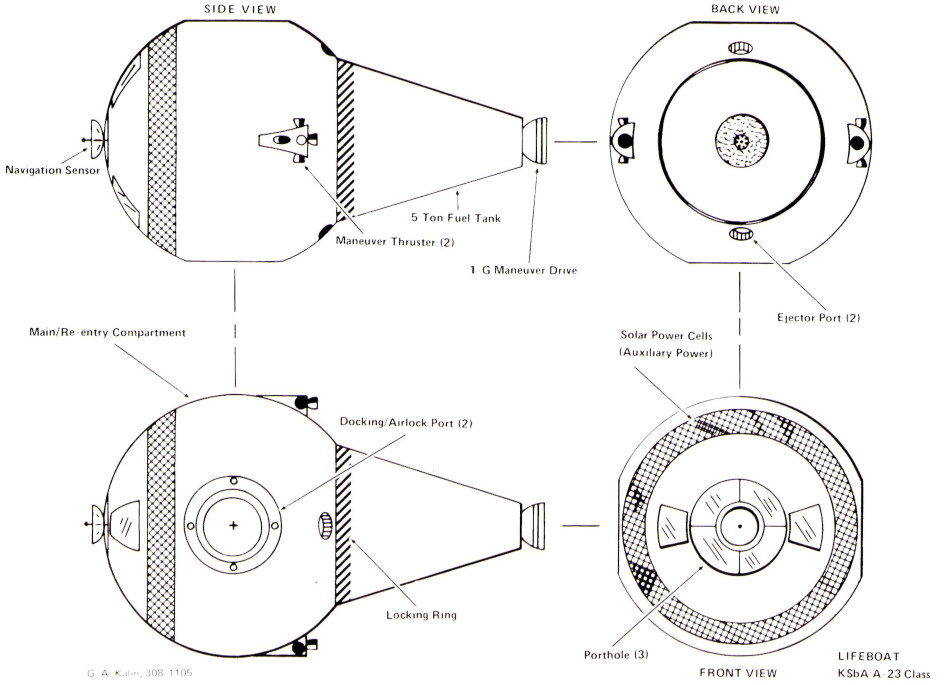

The Ship's Locker

LIFEBOATS

Lifeboats of many designs are in use on larger vessels throughout the Imperium. The above illustration shows one in common use in many regions, the KSbA Model A-23. manufactured by Kaufmann Sternschiffbau Amt.

The craft masses 19.6 metric tons and is capable of carrying three conscious passengers (including the pilot) and an additional twenty in five cold sleep berths, for a total of twenty-three passengers.

The Model A-23 incorporates an ablative heat shield and a simple retro-rocket for atmospheric entry under most conditions. In addition, fuel sufficient for a soft landing under all but the most extreme gravities and a parasail landing parachute permit a reasonable last minute choice of landing sites. A combination of extremely simple controls and a small onboard auto-pilot allow even the most inexperienced small craft pilots a good chance of a safe planetfall. (Base chance 2D for 8+, with DM's of +1 per level of ship's boat skill).

20 tons TL 8 Cr 14000000

RESCUE BALL

This item is standard on all Imperial military vessels and on most private ships as well. When folded, the rescue ball is a cylinder about 5 cm in diameter and about 10 cm long. When deployed, it forms a sphere slightly over one meter in diameter which contains air sufficient to last one person for from one to two hours. In the event of explosive decompression or other loss of air, rescue balls allow individuals not in the possession of vacc suits or those without time to don vacc suits to survive long enough for aid to reach them. The user pulls a lanyard, climbs inside and seals the zip closure. The ball is made of a metal-coated plastic film for ease of location by radar and contains a small bottle of

compressed air, a small first aid kit, and a transparent window through which the occupant may observe conditions outside the ball. Rescue balls provide some protection from stellar radiation and from corrosive and insidious atmospheres for a five to seven hours.
5 kg. TL 7 Cr 150

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT KIT
(Individual)

Imperial safety regulations require that one of these kits be carried for each crewmember and passenger aboard all starships. Additionally they are often found on board non-starships, ATVs, and other vehicles. Their value in case of accident is obvious.

Contents:

Filter/Respirator Combination: One per kit, as per book 3.

Water: 8 x ½ liter cans of distilled water.

Food: 30 days supply of dietary supplements and concentrates for one person.

Cold-light Sticks: 30 hollow plastic tubes which, when flexed, give a soft light for 24 hours.

Commlink/Beacon: A combination medium range radio and signaling transponder. One per kit.

Flares: 4 per kit. Signaling devices which when actived, emit a colored smoke and bright light for 15 minutes.

Rifle, survival: A light-weight rifle which disassembles into three basic components, barrel, action and hollow stock, into which the other two may be stored. The weapon comes with 400 rounds of standard ammunition and 100 rounds of shotshell. It is treated as rifle -2.

Tarpaulin: As described in Book 3.

Cord: 5mm diameter x 300m length. Stout cord suitable for snares, etc.

Rope: 1 cm diameter x 50 m length. Suitable for climbing, and so on.

First Aid kit: A small package of bandages, splints, and other equipment for treatment of minor injuries.

Grappling Hook: Used in climbing, attached to rope.

Climbing spikes and hammer: Metal spikes used in climbing steep rock faces.

Machete: Equivalent to blade, as in book 1. Used in cutting vegetation to clear a path, campsite, etc.

Binoculars: As in book 3.

Sheltersuit: A loose-fitting garment with facemask, gloves, and hood which can be used in conjunction with a battery operated heat pump to provide protection from most extreme conditions of hot and cold.

Heat pump: Used with the above. When activated, battery is good for an average 30 days continuous operation.

Raft, 1 person: An inflatable raft capable of keeping one person afloat in water.

Miscellaneous: Fishooks and line, matches, etc.

Survival Manual: A hand-held portable microfilm reader with self contained instructions for survival under many adverse conditions.

Carrying case: 50 x 40 x 15 cm.
25 kg TL 7 Cr 300

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duties. A scout piloting a landing boat for an army unit would be granted a temporary commission at rank 1, and for the duration of the war would receive pay and privileges normally accorded an army lieutenant.

Ex-scout personnel 66 years or older are exempted from recall to duty.

— Loren K. Wiseman

CONTACT! Aslan

Commonly considered one of the six major races, the Aslan average 2 m in height and weigh about 100 kg. They are descended from four-limbed, upright, bipedal carnivore/pouncer stock, originally adapted to a solitary arboreal existance. The earliest Terran explorers saw in them a vague resemblance to the terran lion. and they have been described as lion-like ever since, although there is very little resemblance. The derivation of the word Aslan is unknown. There are two sexes, male and female. The most notable external difference is the increased size and mane of the former. Females outnumber males by a ratio of 3:1.

Aslan have a single highly specialized claw under each thumb (see illo, p. 37) which folds back jacknife fashion into a horny covering in the base of the thumb and palm. Three fingers oppose a medially placed thumb, all sporting more ordinary retractable claws. The presence of these claws and the nature of their build make the Aslan very clumsy when using human tools.

HISTORY

Approximately 1,800,000 years ago, a climatic shift of catastrophic proportions caused the extensive forests of Onazu (the largest continent on Kuzu, the Aslan homeworld) to almost completely disappear. As the forests dwindled, so did the small fauna upon which the Aslan had preyed, forcing them to venture out on the rapidly expanding grasslands. The larger animals of the grasslands proved too much for a single individual, and the Aslan were forced to take up hunting in prides (Aslan: ahriy) in order to survive. The basis of their extremely close family bonds can be found here.

SOCIETY

The Aslan are a warrior race, proud and noble, devoted to those in authority above them. An individual Aslan is usually a member of a family (e'kho) of from 2 to 12 individuals under a patriarchal leader. Several families will combine into a pride (ahriy), with one family dominant. A number of prides form a clan (huiha) again with a top pride. Aside from military organizations and the ruling council, the clan is the highest social/political organization among the Aslan.

A deep-seated territorial instinct causes the Aslan to have an inordinate (from a human standpoint) concern with land. For male Aslan, owning land is a major goal in life.

Landholding Aslan concern themselves exclusively with government, sport, and the military (as high officers) depending upon their wives and daughters to handle the everyday affairs of their lives. An upper class Aslan male has only the sketchiest concept of money and no inkling at all of how to exist in a technological society. He could not survive without someone to manage his affairs and keep him from bankruptcy. This position is traditionally filled by a wife, although another female relative can substitute. The ultimate ambition of many Aslan females (particulary of low classes) is to amass a fortune (so as to demonstrate their ability to handle money) and marry the highest class male possible. The greater the fortune she amasses, the higher class male she can marry.

Because of the male/female ratio it is not possible for all females to marry; indeed, not all wish to. Many enter the military (becoming staff officers) and the remainder become teachers, scientists, engineers, administrators, scholars, and merchants.

An Aslan's stature is determined by the amount of land he (or her husband) controls, and the amount any higher lord he may be vassal to controls. The lowest classes of Aslan are landless, and provide the farmers, laborers, craftsmen, and factory workers. The largest landholds (held by one of the 29 largest clans) consist of several worlds. A holder of a large territory will often grant authority over it to vassals (usually sons, brothers, or male relatives by marriage) who administer the land in his name.

Inheritance of a landhold is from father to son. Custom originally led to fights among sons for the right of heir. The loser(s) could become vassals of their brothers or leave and seek a landhold of their own. With the development of starflight, these excess or "second" sons (ihatei) became the vanguard of the Aslan exploration and conquest of space.

The extremely deadly nature of any combat between Aslan has led to an extremely ritualized pattern of behavior designed to reduce conflict. Aslan are extremely polite and formal, and must be dealt with in such a way as not to insult their honor. Although most have learned to be patient with non-Aslan, accidental fights still occur.

GOVERNMENT

On all levels within the Hierate, and on the lower levels throughout the area of Aslan settlement (including those within the Imperium) the family structure of the Aslan and the governmental structure are the same. Disputes be-

tween individuals are handled by the patriarchs, disputes between families by the pride leader, between prides by the clan leader.

Within the Aslan Hierate, high governmental functions are performed by a council of twenty-nine clan leaders chosen from amongst the most powerful clans. "The 29" (as they are called) have quasi-religious status and represent the essential unity of the Aslan race. To be chosen one of "The 29" is the highest honor to which any Aslan can aspire.

No member of the 29 has authority over another clan, or over the Hierate as a whole, although each councilor has complete authority over his clan and its allies, colonies, vassals, and clients. The 29 meet continously on Kuzu to adjudicate inter-clan disputes and decide matters of group policy. No member of the 29 speaks for the Hierate as a whole.

MILITARY

For the Aslan of the lower classes, and the second sons of most classes, service in the Hierate military forces is the quickest way to gain a large landhold. In addition to medals, Aslan warriors are often granted estates for acts of extreme gallantry, and officers are sometimes given conquered territory along the frontiers to administer.

The military is the segment of the Aslan culture which is the least family oriented, since soldiers are drawn from all societal classes (mostly lower class and second sons).

There are actually no Hierate military forces per se. Each clan maintains its own, which rarely act in concert with any of the others.

ASLAN IN THE EMPIRE

Large numbers of Aslan have settled outside the Hierate borders. Entire planets of Aslan lie within the Imperium, swearing fealty to the emperor and holding land from him personally. Aslan mercenary units are in great demand (even though they must be employed in all-Aslan units because of their equipment requirements) and Aslan merchants ply trade routes throughout most of known space.

PLAYING THE ASLAN

The player who chooses to be an Aslan should bear in mind that while they have many similarities to humans, they are not human, and should not be played as such. Two hints for the prospective Aslan:

1 — Read as much as possible on Japanese samurai. The underlying characteristics of Aslan society, pride and loyalty, make them behave much like samurai of the "Age of War".

2 — Avoid actions that are out of character. Aslan, for example, are very loyal to their friends, and it is inconceivable for an Aslan to desert a friend in danger if there is a chance of rescue.

REFEREEING ASLAN

The referee should strive to keep players of the Aslan within the

bounds of reasonable Aslan behavior. In the initial adventures, it may be necessary to forbid certain actions or force others until the player becomes accustomed to playing Aslan characters.

Space considerations prohibit us from giving enough data to permit referees to generate Aslan characters in Hierate service, but Aslan may be generated and run through any of the Imperial services with only a few changes to the normal system, explained below. Players, for the present, should restrict themselves to playing Aslan within the Imperial sphere of influence.

CHARACTER GENERATION

The six basic characteristics are determined as per book 1, page 4, with the following exceptions: Add 1 to the result of the strength and endurance throws; subtract one from the result of the dexterity throw. Social standing applies only to inter-Aslan relations.

When using the reaction table (book 3, page 23) for Aslan/non-Aslan interaction, apply a DM of -1 to all encounters where the parties are not known to each other. This represents the slight mutual tension between Aslan and other races. Aslan dealing with a non-Aslan who is not going out of his way to be polite will receive a -3 DM to the reaction table throw if male, -1 if female (unless the Aslan is closely acquainted with the non-Aslan). This represents the tendency of Aslan to lose their tempers when not treated in the way they feel they deserve (less in the female than in the male). This rule does not apply to player interactions, only between player and non-player characters.

Aslan may enlist in any service, but males do not do well in the scouts and merchants (DM -4 for enlistment and re-enlistment rolls in these services if male; if female, roll normally). Aslan do very well in the marines and army (males in the combat arms, females as staff officers; DM +1 for enlistment, promotion, and re-enlistment rolls in these services), but males tend to take unnecessary chances (DM -1 for survival if male). Other and navy have no special DMs.

Skills may be acquired as per books 1, 4, or 5. Brawling and blade skills automatically become dewclaw skill. Aslan Marines will accept training in the cutlass, but all Aslan disdain the use of blade weapons, and will carry them only when in parade uniform.

Other benefits are as for humans.

In combat, treat the dewclaw as a knife. Aslan receive +1 to their morale throws if using book 1, +2 if determining morale for a unit of Aslan per book 4.

Please note that the above changes apply only to Aslan within the Imperium. A more detailed Aslan character generation system will appear later.

ASLAN NAMES

The full details of the formal Aslan name are too complex to go into here, but most Aslan get by (in informal situations, at least) with a shortened version or nickname.

Here is a list of sample Aslan names:

Tlehiui	Esouearl
Tlankhu	Eiwiytlih
Teauearl	Hwyoweas
Kaiear	Akhwohkyal
Ktiskheao	Fesoikhta
Easokhou	Khyuryatre
Yehstahwye	Hrahraiu
Wafoua	Eteasteah
Oakhhafuh	Hruhyaou
Hleakhayes	Iroioah

Loren K. Wiseman,
William H. and J. Andrew Keith

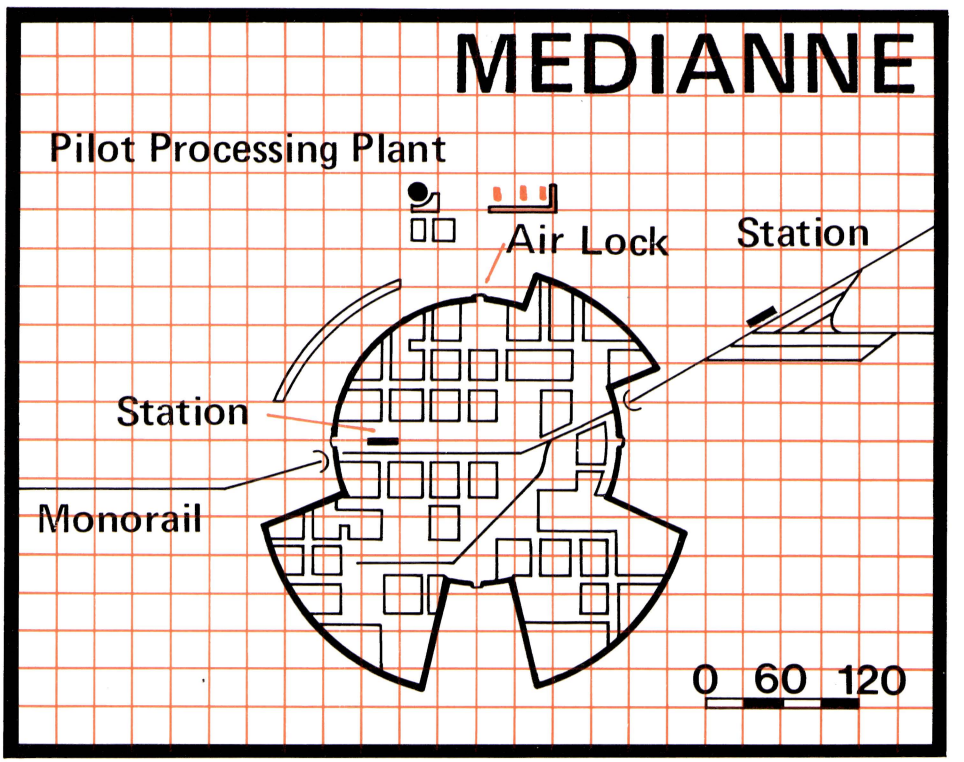
Crystals from Dinom

Medianne is one of three major cities on Dinom/Lanth (0201-D100535-A). It serves as a mining center and shipment point for metallic ores; it sits astride the monorail line which circles the world.

Some months ago, the workers of the world rose in revolution and effectively shut down the starport (a third of the way around Dinom, at Rhylan), the mines, and the production of the mills. As of yet, the revolution's effects have not been felt within the Spinward Marches, but they soon will be. An emergency construction order from the Imperial Navy for jump drives caught Quadric Industries unprepared as the corporation had not yet taken delivery on a shipment of vital zuchai crystal. The major output of the mines near Medianne is well-known to be copper, with some percentages of other basic elemental metals. The fact that zuchai crystal is also mined on Dinom is less well-known. With the revolution, not only has the shipment been delayed; the very location of the raw material stockpile has been misplaced. It would otherwise be a simple matter to land a ship and on-load the ore directly.

Amber Zone

Quadric Industries discussed the matter with the Imperial Navy, and was referred to the mercenary company aboard the Broadsword. The mission is relatively simple: proceed to Dinom and



thence to Medianne. Land, find the local corporation office and its records, and determine the location of the stockpile of zuchai crystal ore. Once that location has been verified, notify the Quadric Industries transport waiting in the system, and then cover its pickup of the goods. The mission ends with the safe jump of the transport outsystem. Details of payment are unimportant— they are handled at the higher levels of corporate intrigue (if the troops insist, the total hire price for this mission is in the range of MCr4 to Mcr5). Each member of the unit (including ship crew) will receive their standard pay for the month of operations, plus a bonus of Cr20,000 each upon successful completion of the mission.

Referee's Information

Much of the information in this situation is derived from the background data of *Across The Bright Face,* Double Adventure 2. A large scale map of Dinom is included in that booklet, and it is suggested that the referee utilize that Double Adventure while running this situation.

The map of Medianne given here is a basic representation of the building locations within the city's dome. The map itself is commonly available as library data. The monorail circling the globe runs directly through the city, and has a siding yard to the east. Monorail stations are located to the east, and within the city. Four major air locks are positioned in the dome foundation walls; large monorail air locks are also built into the walls. All air locks are loosely guarded, but would probably allow non-military personnel through without too much questioning (law level for the world is a good throw here for problems: throw 5- for the guards to be suspicious or overly officious). One of the buildings (chosen by the referee) is the local Dinom Corporation headquarters; and it contains the needed information.

The *Broadsword* will not be able to land close to the city; it should set dwon beyond the horizon (perhaps 400 to 500 km away) and those troops involved in the search mission will be forced to move in overland.

The revolution has quieted down somewhat— there is no longer rioting in the streets and the general mechanisms of society are operating without too much difficulty. However, the corporate headquarters is occupied by the revolutionary workers (2 to 12 individuals; armed with shotguns). They have made the building their own headquarters now, and they have made a shambles of the place. The mercenaries will have to enter the building, search it, and find the materials that they need. The job may use brute force, or it may be done with stealth.

The location lists are obtainable from the files or from suitably knowledgeable individuals. The files are on the second floor, in a data room (throw 10+ to find the lists; per 15 minutes search. Allow DM +1 for a cooperative local, if he or she has been treated well). Interrogation of individuals for the information may result in the disclosure of what the troops are looking for, but can be attempted in any case. For each individual interrogated, throw 11+ for him or her to actually know the required information; on 10 (exactly) allow that individual to think that he knows the information. Proceed with interrogation procedures from that point.

The Stockpile: The zuchai crystals are already packaged and stored in modular containers each holding 3000 kilograms of crystal; at Cr1000 per kilogram, that makes each module worth MCr3. There are fifty containers.

The stockpile location is about 600 kilometers from Medianne.

Quadric Industries has provided a call frequency, and their ship will proceed to the pickup point once notified. *Broadsword* will be required to protect the arrival of the transport. Troops will be required as stevedores to on-load the modules (for troops take eight minutes to load one module).

The Orbital Protection Force (OPF): The revolution has consolidated its gains and gathered together a small OPF of 20 fighters operating in 5 flights of 4 craft each. The craft are based near Rhylan, although the fighters themselves patrol the world and near orbit on a regular basis. In ordinary circumstances, a fighter-*Broadsword* encounter will occur on 10+ (per eight hours). Once alerted to the presence of the *Broadsword* (by an encounter with it or its cutters, or by information from Medianne) the OPF will make it difficult for the mercenary cruiser to operate freely unless it knocks the force out or the command decides to accept a low profile role.

High Guard (second edition) statistics for the local fighters and for the Quadric Industries transport are given below. — *Marc W. Miller*

R-80256 *Gyro Quadrus* R-4211111-000000-00000-0 MCr100.035 400 tons
Book 2 Design Crew=5. TL=9.
Passengers=8. Low=9. Fuel=50. Cargo=200. EP=1.5. Agility=1. No boats mounted.

Dinom Fighters FP-0404411-030000-00001-0 MCr8.65 10 tons
batteries bearing 1 1 Crew=2. TL=10.
Passengers=0. Low=0. Cargo=0. Fuel=1.0. EP=0.4. Agility=4. Bridge installed.

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occurance which often shows up on the random encounter table of book 3. Also, visiting spacehands are the favorite targets of many thieves.

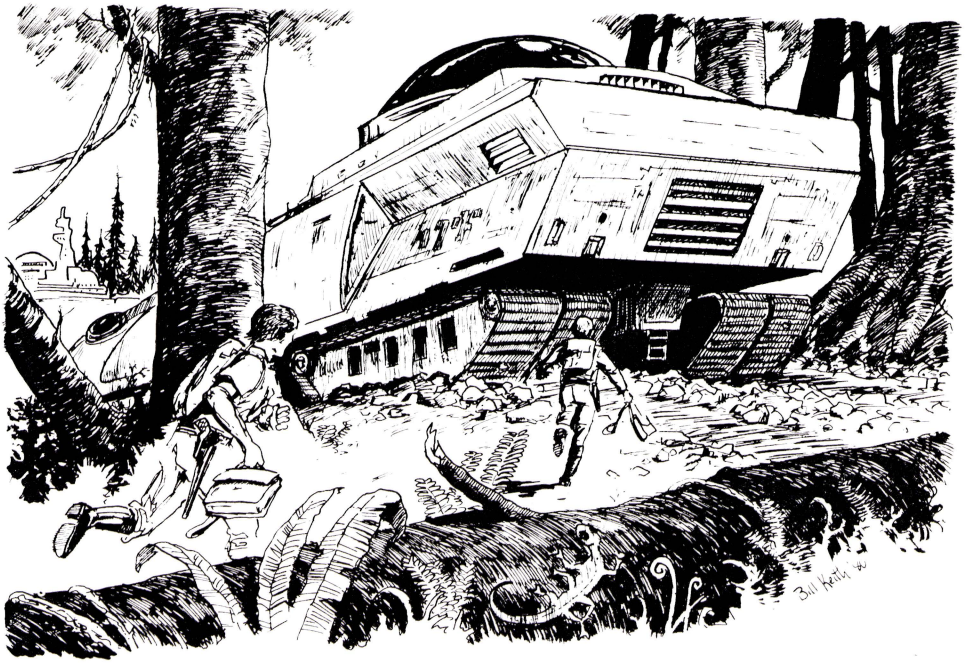
Characters may have their belongings stolen from dirtside hotel rooms, from starship staterooms if security is lax, have their pockets picked, or be "rolled" while engaged with a professional companion.

Shanghaiing is the ultimate danger starship crewmembers and other adventurers face in and around the bars and joyhouses of startown. If 12 exactly is rolled on the 2D crime roll, a non-player will invite an adventurer to drink with him. The drink will be drugged, rendering the adventurer unconscious. The adventurer will awaken 24 hours later, trussed up aboard a starship (8+ for it to be a pirate vessel) bound for parts unknown.

If 9+ is rolled on the crime roll, the adventurer is robbed of all his cash plus other valuables on his person. The circumstances of the theft and the objects stolen should be determined by the referee according to circumstances, but they should be a logical part of the character's activities. For example, a character on a drinking spree could be robbed while unconscious in an alley near the tavern. If he or she is on a crowded street downtown, his or her pocket may be picked. If engaged with a professional companion, his or her wallet might be lifted while he the player is otherwise distracted.

The referee should roll for theft only once during the week the character's ship is in port unless the character is unusually stupid (intelligence 5 or less). Then roll twice to simulate lack of care and foresight.

— *Terrence R. McInnes*



LOGGERHEADS

The planet Ranther (D-539598-5) is renowned for two things: its high humidity and its gigantic trees. The planet's low gravity and extremely rich soils allow the trees to grow to fantastic size, upwards of 300 meters in height and 20 to 30 meters in diameter. The normal respiration of the trees pours great quantities of moisture into the air, making the climate a veritable hothouse for plants of all sorts. Unfortunately for the inhabitants of Ranther, there is no great interstellar market for such great quantities of wood, (even though it is highly prized on some planets) because of Ranther's remote location and the great cost of interstellar travel.

The peculiar conditions of soil, gravity and atmosphere on Ranther have convinced certain interstellar cartels that the planet could be turned into an agricultural planet of great profitmaking potential, and have offered to finance the residents of Ranther if they can present a plan to clear the planet which has a good chance of success.

The trees' size, unfortunately, makes them very hard to cut down, making it very difficult for the planet's colonists to clear land for cultivation. In the century or so that Ranther has been colonized, land has been brought under cultivation only by great effort, and the population is constantly threatening to exceed the maximum dictated by the amount of arable land available.

Amber Zone

A means of rapidly clearing the planet's surface of the trees would permit large areas of Ranther to be devoted to the production of rare foodstuffs on a scale not possible

on most other worlds. Because of this, when General Construction, LIC sought to test its new logging ATV on Ranther, the residents offered every possible cooperation to them, especially after it was discovered thet in return, General would make the loggers available at a reduced rate.

The party is contacted by a representative of the planetary government. The government needs off-planet help to stop a logging machine which is out of control and will pass through a major city in three days.

Referee's Information:

The logger is 720 km away from the city, and is travelling at 10 kilometers per hour. The machine is thirty meters long and has four sets of tractor treads for propulsion. The referee should draw up terrain tables for animal encounters and initial ranges for sighting the logger.

When the players first see the machine, they will notice that it does not look much like a logging device. The machine has no obvious cutting tools, claws or grabbers.

The purported logger is in reality a war machine, being tested for the first time in an unpopulated area of this planet. It is armed with an auto-cannon turret on top, near the back, and two forward mounted laser cannon (equivalent to double strength laser rifles). The machine is constructed from a new, light-weight alloy that is impervious to anything short of anti-tank weapons fire. The weak points of the machine are the front windshield, the turret, and the rear hatch, which is almost undetectable.

Since the turret is mounted on the top, there is a blind spot inside of which the characters are safe from the auto-cannon. If the characters get inside they will find the machine has two levels, with the control center on the top level, in the front. The two crew are dead from laser wounds. The on-board computer, originally programmed to stop hostile infantry from entering the machine, has malfunctioned and has killed the crew. The autopilot will keep it travelling straight and will fire on anything that moves in its near vicinity.

If the players decide to try exterior attack the referee should take into consideration: immobilizing the treads, tipping the machine with explosives, or diverting its course.

Pay can be negotiated between the planet's government and the players, and they might earn a little pocket money by blackmailing General about testing a war machine on a populated planet. They might also try reporting the same fact to the Imperial authorities. — *Ian Delaney*

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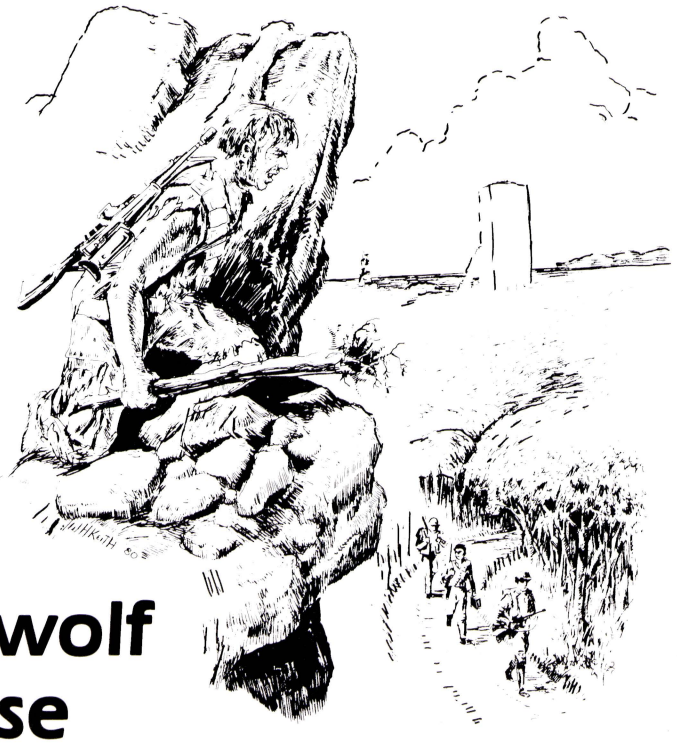
While using Type D battle dress, a dolphin may attain speeds of up to 75 kph in water (more if in a less dense medium such as air). These suits are usually armed with a missile/torpedo rack. Dolphins with Waldo Ops 3+ may use any human weapon as well, although this will drastically reduce swimming speed.

The suits are camouflaged and are generally dark grey on top blending into a light grey or white on the lower surface. A specially fitted snout ram can inflict 8 dice of damage.

Type D battle dress can, with modifications, be used as a vacc suit for dolphins, but situations rarely develop where this is possible or necessary.

Waldo Set: This may be received on the mustering out table. These are a pair of artificial arms with 3-5 fingers each. They are available at tech level 7+, weigh 4 kg and reduce a swimming dolphin's speed by 50%. The average cost is Cr1000. — *Roger E. Moore*



The Werewolf Disease

The planet Taldor (C-866413-8) is owned by Kitzen, Ltd, a company specializing in biochemistry. The population of the world is concentrated about the capital and starport, Port Stagbuck, situated on the island of Bekain.

In port Stagbuck the adventurers are contacted by a representative of the government/company. She offers them a Cr 100000 success only contract for a mission. She is rather secretive of the exact nature of the mission, saying only that she wants the players to catch alive an armed man roaming the wilderness on Bekain. When the players have accepted the mission, she will explain more thoroughly.

A week ago a young lab technician was accidently infected with an experimental virus. He was kept in isolation in a high security hospital. Two days local (34h) ago he suddenly turned very ill. In a terrible rage he broke out of the hospital, causing great damage in the process. He managed to steal an advanced combat rifle and was later seen running out of Port Stagbuck at extremely high speed.

The group's task is very simple, she says. They are to find, catch, and bring this man back alive to Port Stagbuck. Kitzen, Ltd will supply the adventurers with gas grenades, combat snub pistols and crossbows with gas and tranquilizer ammunition. The adventurers can also borrow non-military vehicles, but will have any costs of repair deducted from their pay.

Amber Zone

Referee's Information:

The referee will have to prepare a map of Bekain. The island is roughly

circular, with a diameter of approximately 300 km. Port Stagbuck is located on the northeastern coast. The city is the only settlement on Bekain. Most terrain types possible in a temperate climate can be included.

To track the technician recon or perhaps survival skill should be necessary, but it should not be impossible for the average person to follow him since he has killed a great many animals. The man has had his UPP modified by the disease to FFFCCA. His metabolism has been speeded up and he acts is if he had taken slow drug. His senses have also been improved, which makes it difficult to surprise him. He has turned wildly paranoic and will consider all animals and humans as a threat to his life. observe that he is capable of very intelligent planning.

He has approximately fifty rounds of DS ammunition for the ACR. For protection he uses cloth armor which he took from a security guard during his escape. In close combat he fights with a cudgel which he has made from a tree limb.

The technician is slightly agoraphobic and because of that his hut or lair will be in an area with a dense terrain, e.g. mountain or forest.

Available gases are sleep gas, blind gas (which temporarily paralyzes the optic nerve) and teargas. The tranq darts for the snub pistols and the crossbows are the typical sleep inducing type. The effect of the sleep gas is that the dexterity and endurance of the man are reduced to 3 in four rounds. The effect will last about 15 minutes. This reduction will not effect the capability of taking wounds. No one knows anything about the ability of the man to stay awake in his current condition, which would cause a nasty surprise for the players. The effect of the tranquilizers and of the tear gas should also be unknown to the players. If the technician is blinded, he would still be surprisingly effecient, using his improved senses of hearing and smell.

– Anders Blixt

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in each bedroom as well as in the main living area. It controls the operation of the power plant and the recycler, but performs little else on its own. It can be programmed for wake-up calls, remembering messages or information, and routine calculations.

Performance: The shelter is rated to withstand temperatures from -50 to +100 centigrade and (when properly anchored) can resist winds up to 200 kph. The standard load of rations is 800 person-days, and the power plant can run up to 100 days without recharging.

Set-up: The shelter, in its stored mode, is totally unusable by individuals. It must first be erected on its site, anchored to the ground, and the power plant turned on. Expansion from collapsed to erected state takes two persons approximately 3 hours (one person takes 8 hours); installing the ground anchors takes another four hours for one person, but is not always necessary immediately. Turning on the power plant, and insuring that it is running properly takes about an hour for one person.

Taking down the structure takes less time: two hours for two people to collapse the shelter, and one hour for one person to remove the anchors. Turning off the power plant is only a few minutes work.

Cost: The model 317 pressurized shelter is priced at Cr50,000, minus rations and personal equipment. The shelter is available at GSbAG outlets on most tech level 8+ worlds within the Spinward Marches.

– Marc W. Miller

Traveller Stock Exchange

"...Common stock in Oberlindes Lines plummeted 27 points on the Regina exchange before trading was suspended." Traveller News Service, Date: 097-1105.

A freewheeling intergalactic stock exchange can be an exciting source of financial gain or loss in a *Traveller* campaign. Thousands of credits can change hands as the market moves with the ebb and flow of sector-wide or galaxy-wide events; events which might even be the result of player's efforts for or against another company.

The first step in exchange simulation is to list the stocks that are available for purchase. The list should include all of the larger companies that are involved in your present campaign. The list must be diverse enough to give your players a wide choice while also reflecting the Tech Level of the planet on which the exchange is located. Planets with a tech level below 4 should not have the type of exchange simulated here.

Next, an operating price for the stocks must be determined. This can be done for all of the stocks at one time, or individually as players check prices before making their purchases. Roll 2D and multiply the result by 10 for each stock. This is the price in credits for which each individual share be purchased. It is recommended that all purchases be made in round-lots, 100's of shares, to simplify bookkeeping. A purchase or sales commission should be levied on every transaction; either a fixed percentage (1-2%) of the total price or a small fixed charge per share.

Determining the price movement of a stock can be handled in numerous ways. One method is to construct a random movement table. Use six rows and six columns. Assign each row and column intersection a number from 1 to 12; each number will be repeated three times upon the table. Throw 1D to give

the row coordinate and another to give the column coordinate, cross index the two and read the price movement directly from the table. This is the number of credits the stock will rise or fall in price.

Another method is to simply throw a designated number of dice. For example, a company that is very stable might throw only 1D, giving a range of price movements of from Cr 1 to 6. A company involved in a very speculative business might require a 3D throw, giving a price movement of Cr 3 to 18. The number of dice thrown reflects a particular stock's potential for gain or loss, so that this should be determined and made known to any player who wishes to buy a stock. Some players will seek out high risk stocks, cautious players will avoid them.

The direction of the price change can be both random or predetermined, During "normal" times, the stock price direction can be determined by a die roll. A throw of 1 or 2 means the stock drops in price, a 3 or 4 means no change, and the amount determined above should be ignored, and a roll of 5 or 6 means the stock rises in value. The referee should decide how quickly the market should move and make the price direction roll reflect that decision. Predetermined price change direction occurs when sector or galactic events affect local economic conditions. For instance, at the outbreak of a war, the stock prices of companies with some form of military production would almost always rise. News of a defeat of a sector's forces would make stock prices fall except those that have an interest in precious metals. The price movement would still have to be randomly determined but the direction of price change would be predetermined.

Stock prices move at the discretion of the referee. He or she may choose to roll for events daily, weekly, or at any other appropriate interval.

Although our contemporary exchanges quote stock prices in fractions, this is a useless complication (unless you happen to love fractional calculations!)

This type of simulation is a very rough approximation of a "random walk" stock market. It is designed to give the feel of a market rather than exactly duplicate elementary market operations. For this reason, such things as selling short, puts and calls and commodity contracts have been omitted.

Occasionally, the "random walk" will result in a stock continually falling in value. The referee could allow this to continue unchecked, indicating a bankruptcy or some other financial diseaster for the company, or the referee could decide that the stock did not fall that day after all, and arbitrarily declare a rise or no change in the stock's value. It is up to the referee to determine what will happen next. He or she can suspend trading until the price change direction roll indicates an upward move, dictate the direction change, or let the company fold (in which case the player's investment is totally lost). Note, however, that a bankruptcy by a company large enough to have stock traded on an exchange is rare.

The stock exchange should be well-planned and easy for the referee, to operate. Increased levels of complexity and sophistication can easily be added if the need arises (for instance, my exchange allows the previous price change direction to influence the new price change direction, so market trends can be simulated). Most *Travellers' Aid* facilities should have current market reports. If you use a city map in your campaign give the exchange a specific location and you are well on your way to creating a financial district.

— Stan Mullins

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